

CAMEROON’S COMBINED REPORT COMPRISING THE:

- **7TH, 8TH AND 9TH PERIODIC REPORTS UNDER THE AFRICAN CHARTER ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES’ RIGHTS (ACHPR);**
- **1ST, 2ND, AND 3RD PERIODIC REPORTS UNDER THE ACHPR ON THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN IN AFRICA (MAPUTO PROTOCOL) ;**
- **1ST, 2ND, AND 3RD REPORTS UNDER THE CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION AND ASSISTANCE OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS IN AFRICA (KAMPALA CONVENTION);**
- **INITIAL REPORT UNDER THE PROTOCOL TO THE ACHPR ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN AFRICA; AND**
- **INITIAL REPORT UNDER THE PROTOCOL TO THE ACHPR ON THE RIGHTS OF OLDER PERSONS.**

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACHPR	: African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights
(AEP-Youth)	: Agropastoral Entrepreneurship Promotion Programme (AEP-Youth)
AcomHPR	: African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights
ACT	: Artemisinin-based Combination Therapy
AENF	: Non-formal Education
AIDS	: Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
AEP-Youth	: Agropastoral Entrepreneurship Promotion Programme
AEWA	: African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement
AFCON	: Africa Cup of Nations
AFD	: French Development Agency
AfDB	: African Development Bank
ANDP	: National Alliance for Democracy and Progress
APAC	: <i>Association Amour pour les personnes âgées du Cameroun</i>
APED	: <i>Alliance pour la promotion de l'éducation et du développement</i>
APME	: Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Promotion Agency
ART	: Telecommunications Regulatory Board
ARV	: Antiretrovirals
bOPV	: Bivalent oral poliovirus vaccine
BUNEC	: National Civil Status Registration Office
CAF	: Functional Literacy Centres
CCCP	: Cameroon Clubfoot Care Project
CAMWATER	: Cameroon Water Utilities Corporation
CBCHS	: Cameroon Baptist Convention Health Services
CBM	: Christian Blind Mission
CC	: Civil Code
CCCMB	: Commission for the Control of Collective Management Bodies
CCCP	: Cameroon Clubfoot Care Project
CDNU	: University Digital Development Centres
CEBNF	: Non-Formal Basic Education Centres
CEMAC	: Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa
CENC	: National Episcopal Conference of Cameroon
CEPCA	: Council of Protestant Churches of Cameroon

CERD	: Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination
CERSP	: Cameroon Education Reform Support Programme
CFC	: Cameroon Housing Loan Fund
CFCE	: Business Creation Formality Centres
CHAN	: African Nations Championship
CHRACERH	:Gynecological Endoscopic Surgery and Human Reproductive Teaching Hospital
CHRC	: Cameroon Human Rights Commission
CIDIMUC	: Cameroon Council of Imams and Muslim Dignitaries
CIMENCAM	: <i>Cimenteries du Cameroun</i>
CIPRES	: Inter-African Conference on Social Welfare
CLTS	: Community Led Total Sanitation
CMPJ	: Multipurpose Youth Empowerment Centres
CNROP	: Cameroon Network for the Rights of Older Persons
CONRHA	: National Committee for the Rehabilitation and Socio- Economic Reintegration of Persons with Disabilities
CPDFC-AR	: Certificate of Possession of Administratively Recognized Customary Land Rights
CPDM	: Cameroon People’s Democratic Movement
CPFF	: Women Empowerment and Family Centres
CRTV	: Cameroon Radio Television
CS	: Civil society
CVUC	: United Councils and Cities of Cameroon
DDHCI	: Department of Human Rights and International Cooperation
DGSN	: General Delegation for National Security
ECCAS	: Economic Community of Central African States
ECT	: Emergency cash transfers
ECW	: Education Cannot Wait
ELECAM	: Elections Cameroon
EMIA	: Combined Services Military Academy
ENAM	: National School of Administration and Magistracy
ENAP	: National School of Penitentiary Administration
FENASCO	: National School Games Federation
FENASU	: National University Sports Federation
FGM	: Female Genital Mutilation

FOGAJEUNE	: Guarantee Fund for Young Entrepreneurs
FONIJ	: National Youth Integration Fund
FSNC	: Cameroon National Salvation Front
GBV	: Gender-Based violence
GCE	: General Certificate of Education
GESP	: Growth and Employment Strategy Paper
GIC	: Common Initiative Groups
GMW	: Guaranteed Minimum Wage
GSB	: Gender Sensitive Budgeting
GSBD	: Gender Sensitive Budget Document
GTTC	: Government Teachers Training College
GTTTC	: Government Technical Teachers Training College
HACCP	: Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point
UNHCR	: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
HIV	: Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HRP	: Humanitarian Response Plan
HSS	: Health Sector Strategy
HTTC	: Higher Teacher Training Colleges
HTTTC	: Higher Technical Teacher Training Colleges
ICLS	: Inter-Ministerial Committee on Local Services
ICT	: Information and Communication Technologies
IDB	: Islamic Development Bank
IDPs	: Internally Displaced Persons
IEDs	: Improvised Explosive Devices
IFAD	: International Fund for Agricultural Development
IGA	: Income-Generating Activities
IGAPEN	: Inspectorate General of Penitentiary Administration
IGAs	: Income Generating Activities
IGJS	: Inspectorate General of Judicial Services
IOM	: International Organization for Migration
IRAD	: Institute of Agricultural Research for Development
JENASESCO	: National Extracurricular Sports Games
JPO	: Judicial Police Officers

KOICA	: Korea International Cooperation Agency
LAFTA	: Living Alternatives for the Ageing
LIFIDEP	: Livestock Fisheries Development Project
LIW	: Labour-intensive work.
LLINs	: Long Lasting Insecticide-Treated Mosquito Nets
MAETUR	: Urban and Rural Lands Development and Equipment Authority
MAR	: Medically Assisted Reproduction
MCNC	: Cameroon National Citizens' Movement
MDR	: Movement for the Defence of the Republic
MINADER	: Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MINAS	: Ministry of Social Affairs
MINAT	: Ministry of Territorial Administration
MINDCAF	: Ministry of State Property, Surveys and Land Tenure
MINDDEVEL	: Ministry of Decentralisation and Local Development
MINDEF	: Ministry of Defence
MINEDUB	: Ministry of Base Education
MINEFOP	: Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training
MINESEC	: Ministry of Secondary Education
MINESUP	: Ministry of Higher Education
MINFI	: Ministry of Finance
MINFOPRA	: Ministry of Public Service and Administration Reform
MINHDU	: Ministry of Housing and Urban Development
MINJEC	: Ministry of Youth Affairs and Civic Education
MINJUSTICE	: Ministry of Justice
MINPMEESA	: Ministry of Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprises, Social Economy and Handicraft
MINPOSTEL	: Ministry of Post and Telecommunications
MINPROFF	: Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family
MINRESI	: Ministry of Research and Scientific Innovation
MINSANTE	: Ministry of Public Health
MINTP	: Ministry of Public Works
MINTSS	: Ministry of Labour and Social Security
MINUSCA	: United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic

MIPROMALO	: Local Material Promotion Authority
MIRAP	: Consumer Products Supply Regulatory Authority
MND	: Major National Dialogue
MPCN	: Patriotic Movement for a New Cameroon
MUPAC	: Association of Older Persons in Cameroon
NASLA	: National School of Local Administration
NCC	: National Communication Council
NCPBM	: National Commission on the Promotion of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism
NDDRC	: National Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Committee
NEF	: National Employment Fund
NFI	: Non-Food Items
NGOs	: Non Governmental Organisations
NGP	: National Gender Policy NGP
NHDP	: National Health Development Plan
NHRI	: National Human Rights Institution
NHSP	: The National Health Strategic Plan of Cameroon
NIS	: National Institute of Statistics
NPD	: National Policy Document
NPIE	: National Policy of Inclusive Education
NRCPD	: Cardinal Paul Emile LEGER National Centre for the Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities
NSC	: National Statistics Council
NSIF	: National Social Insurance Fund
NSP	: National Strategic Plan
NSPP	: National Social Protection Policy
NTTPDC	: National Trainer Training and Programmes Development Centre
NUDP	: National Union for Democracy and Progress
OCDS	: Cameroon Organisation for the Development of the Deaf
OCT	: Ordinary cash transfers
OEWG	: Open-Ended Working Group
ONACAM	: National Office for Veterans, Former Military Personnel and Victims of War of Cameroon
ONJ	: National Youth Observatory
OPCAT	: Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture

PADESCE	: Secondary Education and Skills Development Support Project for Growth and Employment
PADY	: Yaounde Sanitation Project
PAEA-MRU	: Rural Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Project
PAEPYS	: Supply Project for the City of Yaoundé
PAREC	: Economic Resilience Support Project
PARPAC	: Project for the Strengthening of Agricultural Production in Cameroon
PARSE	: Project to Support the Socio-Economic Resilience of Vulnerable Youth
PASMNI	: Project for Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health
PATNUC	: Project for the Acceleration of Digital Transformation of Cameroon
PBF	: United Nations Peacebuilding Fund
PC	: Penal Code
PCCM	: Municipal Housing Construction Programme
PCMPI	: Morbidity Management and Incapacity Prevention Plan
PCRN	: Cameroonian Party for National Reconciliation
PIDMA	: Agriculture Investment and Market Development Project
PLADDT	: Local Development and Sustainable Development Plans
PLANUT	: Plan for Economic Growth
PMTC	: Prevent Mother to Child Transmission
PNDP	: National Participatory Development Programme
PNDPA	: National Development Plan for indigenous people
PNVRS	: National Programme for Monitoring and Strengthening of Food Security
PO	: Peasant Organisations
PPRD	: Presidential Plan for the Reconstruction and Development
PRODEL	: Livestock Development Project
PROLAC	: Commission, Lake Chad Region Recovery and Development Project
PSEO	: Strategic Plan for the Elimination of Onchocerciasis
PSNSC	: National Strategic Plan for Community Health
PSRDREN	: Program for the Reconstruction and Development of the Far-North Region
REP	: Regional Economic Programme
RESAEC	: Community Education Animators Network
RIC	: Cameroon inter-university network

RIN	: North Interconnected Network
RIS	: South Interconnected Network
RLA	: Regional and Local authorities
RLAs	: Regional and Local Authorities
S C	: Supreme Court
SASNIM	: Mother and Child Health and Nutrition Action Week
SCC	: Special Criminal Court
SCH	: Schistosomiasis
SDF	: Social Democratic Front
SDGs	: Sustainable Development Goals
SIARC	: International Crafts Fair of Cameroon
SIC	: Cameroon Real Estate Corporation
SIGIRES	: System for Integrated Management of Higher Education in Cameroon
SMEs	: Small and Medium Enterprises
SND30	: National Development Strategy
SNDS	: National Strategy for the Development of Statistics
SNIS	: National Statistical Information System
SONAMINES	: National Mining Corporation
STDs	Sexually transmitted Diseases
STHs	: Soil-Transmitted Helminths
STIs	: sexually transmitted infections
SWEDD	: Sub-Saharan Africa Women's Empowerment and Demographic Dividend Project
SWEDD2	: Sahel Women Empowerment and Demographic Dividend Project
TNC	: Technical National Committee
TPD	: <i>Tribunal de Premier Degré</i>
UDC	: Cameroon Democratic Union
UHC	: Universal Health Coverage
UMS	: Union of Socialist Movements
UNCHRD-CA	: United Nations Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa
UNDP	: United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	: United Nations Population Fund

UNICEF	: United Nation Children’s Fund
UNOCA	: United Nations Regional Office for Africa
UPC	: <i>Union des Populations du Cameroun</i>
UPR	: Universal Periodic Review
VIACAM	: <i>Vieillards Invalides et Abandonnés du Cameroun</i>
VIVA-BENOUE	: Benoue Valley Investment Development and Enhancement Project
WB	: World Bank;
WSS	: Water supply systems

GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE COMBINED REPORT

- 1-** Cameroon presents its 7th, 8th and 9th periodic reports under the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) as a combined Report. This Report equally stands for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd periodic Reports under the Protocol to the ACHPR on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol) and for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd periodic Reports under the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Protocol). This Report also accounts for the initial Report under the Protocol to the ACHPR on the rights of persons with disabilities in Africa and the initial Report under the Protocol to the ACHPR on the rights of Older Persons.
- 2-** This combined Report covers the period from 2019 to 2024 for the first 3 reports mentioned, the period from 2022 to 2024 for the Report under the Protocol on the rights of persons with disabilities in Africa and Protocol to the ACHPR on the rights of Older Persons. The issues already addressed in previous reports and that did not change during the period under review are not repeated in this report.
- 3-** After Cameroon defended its Report under the aforementioned instruments, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (AcomHPR) issued its Final Observations.
- 4-** This Report highlights the main measures taken by the State of Cameroon since the said defence, in accordance with the commitments reiterated during the celebration of the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and for the defence of its report under the 3rd cycle of the UPR.
- 5-** This Report which is drafted by the Ministry of Justice (MINJUSTICE) results from collaboration with other Ministries, institutions, national and international organisations and well as civil society organisations. They took part in the whole process, from data collection to various validations. In fact, this Report underwent a first validation in January 2025, then a validation by civil society organisations under the supervision of the Cameroon Human Rights Commission on 27 February 2025. This activity was coordinated by the Interministerial Committee for monitoring the implementation of recommendations and/or decisions of international and regional mechanisms tasked with promoting and protecting Human Rights. The said Committee has its headquarters at the Prime Minister's Office.
- 6-** This Report comprises several parts, each of them concerning one of the aforementioned instruments. These parts are preceded by this general introduction to the combined Report and by a preliminary chapter. A general conclusion comes at the end.

PRELIMINARY CHAPTER: DEVELOPMENTS RELATING TO THE STRATEGIC, NORMATIVE AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK ON THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

7- From 2019 to 2024, there were changes in Cameroon marked by internal and external factors. Events of variable magnitude occurred and more or less had a long term impact on promotion and protection of Human Rights policies. As the State was working towards curbing the security crises in the Far North, East, North West and South West Regions through military and conciliatory approaches, the Covid 19 health crisis erupted. In response, immediate and strong adaptation measures were taken in relation to the global crisis. During the same period, the State had to manage the aftermath of the 2018 presidential election and other subsequent electoral conflicts that had an impact on the political environment, resulting in an upsurge of intolerance and hate speech notably.

8- As Cameroon was still dealing with these issues, the conflict between Russia and Ukraine erupted in February 2022. The economic challenges faced by the country were exacerbated by this conflict. During the same period, the climate crisis evolved, resulting in significant changes.

9- Despite these crises, Cameroon lavished hospitality by organising the Total Energies Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) 2021 from 4 January to 6 February 2022. The talent of the sons and daughters of Cameroon was displayed on this occasion through various cultural events.

10- In order for its action in Human Rights to be assessed, Cameroon relied on the expertise of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and its peers for the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in November 2023. Cameroon also affirmed its commitments in Human Rights during the celebration of the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

11- It is in this context that changes occurred in the strategic, institutional, and normative framework relating to Human Rights.

Section I: Strategic Developments

12- During the reference period, Cameroon adopted the 2020-2030 National Development Strategy (NDS 30). This strategy has four pillars: the structural transformation of economy, development of human capital and well-being, the promotion of employment and economic integration, governance, decentralisation and strategic management of the State.

13- It also comprises thematic or sector strategies including the strategy for the development of the industries and services sector, the strategy for the development of infrastructure, the strategy for social services and the National Policy for social protection (2020-2030), the strategy for the health sector and the strategy for governance.

14- The adoption of the NDS 30 enabled the start or finalisation of the update of sector strategies. As part of updates started, the National Plan of Action for the promotion and protection of Human Rights (2015-2019) and the National Gender Policy (2014-2022) can be

mentioned. Strategies finalised include the Country Programme for Decent Work (2023-2026). It is worth mentioning that gender responsive budgeting is increasingly anchored in various public policies with funds specifically allocated for this purpose.

Section 2: Institutional Developments

15- In order to better address concerns expressed by the social fabric, there was a reform of institutions either by reorganising existing ones or by setting-up new ones.

§1: Reorganisation of Existing Institutions

16- The National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) changed, new members were appointed to the Constitutional Council and Elections Cameroon and institutions in the justice sector were streamlined.

A: Transformation of the NHRI

17- The National Commission for Human Rights and Freedoms became the Cameroon Human Rights Commission (CHRC). This change enabled a better alignment of the status of the CHRC with the Paris Principles¹, especially with the appointment of permanent members. Moreover, the CHRC also serves as the National Mechanism for the Prevention of Torture. The CHRC has been operational since 19 February 2021. It comprises a President, a Vice-President and 13 members including 3 women.

B: Appointment of New Members in the Constitutional Council and in the Electoral Council of Elections Cameroon

18- As the Constitutional Council is an essential institution for the guarantee of political rights, new members were appointed to fill some vacancies.

19- Also, the Electoral Council of Elections Cameroon was renewed as new members were appointed and others reappointed.

C: Institutions enhancing the Quality of Justice

20- Particular attention was given to Corps strengthening the Judiciary. So, the rules and regulations of Bailiffs were amended² by Decree No. 2023/42 of 25 January 2023 to lay down the rules and regulations and the organisation of the profession of Bailiff and Enforcement Agent. Also, in 2024, after more than 15 years, the Bar entrance examination was organised. Some 2,016 Advocates-in-training were successful and took an oath.

21- In the same vein, Assessors in matters of juvenile delinquency and probation officers were appointed in 2023³.

§2: Setting-up of New Institutions

22- New institutions were set up either as a strategy to manage crises, or to protect some rights.

¹ Paris Principles concerning the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of Human Rights adopted on 20 December 1993 following Resolution 48/134 of the United Nations General Assembly.

² The previous Decree was adopted in 1979.

³ By Joint Order No. 423/MINJUSTICE and No. 2/MINAS of 13 September 2023. They were appointed for the 2023 and 2024 judicial years.

A: Institutions Supporting Crises Management and Decentralisation

23- One of the major concerns is the crisis in some regions of the country. After the Major National Dialogue held in 2019, Decree No. 2020/136 of 23 March 2020 to lay down the establishment, the organization and functioning of the Committee to follow up the implementation of the recommendations of the Major National Dialogue was signed. One of the recommendations of the Major National Dialogue was to further decentralisation. The institutions aiming at structuring, strengthening and supporting that policy were set up from 2020. This is the case with the Interministerial Committee for local services, the Public Independent Conciliators, the National School of Local Administration and Regional Councils in 2021.

1: Regional Councils

24- The Regions provided for in the Constitution of 18 January 1996 were organised by Decree No. 2008/376 of 12 November 2008 relating to the administrative organisation of the Republic of Cameroon, followed by Law No. 2019/24 of 24 December 2019 to institute the general code of regional and local authorities (RLA). The first election of Regional Councillors was held on 6 December 2020. This resulted in the election of 900 Councillors, that is, 90 per Region, including 70 divisional representatives and 20 traditional authorities.

2: The Inter-Ministerial Committee on Local Services (ICLS)

25- Decree No. 2020/680 of 9 November 2020 to lay down the organisation and functioning of the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Local Services reorganises this institution ⁴, with better representation of regional and local ⁵ authorities. It is a consultative organ responsible for preparing and following up the transfer of authority and resources to RLA. The ICLS shall draw up a programme for the transfer of authority and resources, evaluate the human and material resources necessary for the exercise of transferred authority; evaluate the resultant cost of the transfer of authority, monitor implementation by RLA of the authority transferred; prepare the annual report on the status of decentralization and the functioning of local services; conduct prospective studies and analysis in the field of decentralization.

3: Committee to follow up the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Major National Dialogue.

26- After the holding of the Major National Dialogue that was organised to find solutions to the major crises in the North West, South West and Far North Regions, a follow-up Committee was set up. It is chaired by the Prime Minister, Head of Government and is made up of 17 personalities representing various religions, youths, the diaspora, the civil society and the President of the National Commission for the Promotion of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism.

27- The Committee is in charge of following-up the implementation of recommendations of the Major National Dialogue as approved by the President of the Republic, by taking into account necessary strategic guidelines, prescribing activities to contribute to it, by gathering opinions

⁴ The previous Decree was Decree No. 2008/14 of 17 January 2008 on the organization and functioning of the ICLS.

⁵ With 7 councils' representatives as against 4 previously; 3 Regions' representatives as against 2 previously; 3 City Councils' representatives as against 2 previously.

and suggestions for this purpose and mobilising Cameroonians in the country and abroad to build peace and national development.

4: The Public Independent Conciliator

28- Appointed exclusively in the North West and South West Regions for a 6-year term non-renewable, the Public Independent Conciliator is an independent authority. He is notably responsible for amicably settling disputes between users and regional and council administrations, protecting rights and freedoms in the relationship between citizens and the Region or the councils of the Region; designing and implementing measures to prevent any discrimination against users, proposing statutory and regulatory amendments with a view to improving the quality of regional and council services.

29- A written or oral complaint may be lodged with the Public Independent Conciliator by any natural or legal person. He shall examine the petition submitted to him within 60 days. Where his recommendations are not implemented, the Public Independent Conciliator may order the regional or council administration concerned, and if necessary, draft a special report which may be made public.

5: The National School of Local Administration (NASLA)

30- NASLA was set up by Decree No. 2020/111 of 2 March 2020. It is a public administrative and professional establishment headquartered in Buea, South West Region. NASLA provides diploma initial training, in-service and specific training, applied research on the management of RLA, organises colloquia, seminars or conferences on issues related to the implementation of decentralisation to promote local development.

B: Institutions meant to strengthen certain Rights

31- Institutions were established or reorganised to further protect the right to liberty and security, with the setting-up of a school dedicated to peacekeeping or bodies responsible for the coordination of actions as regards money laundering, terrorism, smuggling of and trafficking in persons. Moreover, with regard to the right to freedom of communication, the Telecommunications Regulatory Board (ART) was reorganized and the National Mining Corporation was set up in view of better controlling mining and guaranteeing the right to a healthy environment.:

1: The National Mining Corporation

32- In a bid to safeguard the interests of the State and of the population concerning mining, the National Mining Corporation (SONAMINES) was set up in 2020⁶ and its first managing team was appointed in 2021⁷. SONAMINES is responsible in particular of carrying out the inventory of mining showings, conducting studies on the exploration and exploitation of mineral substances, carrying out mineral substance purchase and marketing transactions on behalf of the State, acquiring shares in mining companies, ensuring the restoration, rehabilitation and closure of mining sites, participating in negotiations and monitoring the execution of contracts signed between the State and mining companies, contributing to the promotion of transparency

⁶ See Decree No. 2020/774 of 14 December 2020

⁷ Resolution No. 2/CAE1/SOAMINES of 16 April 2021 to appoint the *Director General and the Deputy Director General of SONAMINES*

in the mining sector, contributing to the promotion of geological and mining information, exclusively carrying out gold and diamond purchasing and marketing operations.

33- Since September 2021, SONAMINES launched a campaign against child labour in mines after the signature of Decision No. 465/D/MINMIDT/SG/DAJ of 30 August 2021 of the Minister in charge of mines prohibiting access to mines to minors all over the national territory.

2: Peacekeeping Operations Training School of Motcheboun

34- It was set up by Decree No. 2020/399 of 4 September 2023. The peacekeeping operations training school is responsible for:

- operational training of national and possibly foreign contingents as well as personnel appointed to serve within the framework of peacekeeping operations;
- the capacity-building of personnel of the Ministry of Defence in the area of peacekeeping;

35- It is also responsible for any other mission that could be entrusted to it in the area of peacekeeping.

3: Committee on National Policies against Money Laundering, Terrorist Financing and Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction

36- It was set up by Decree No. 2023/460 of 30 October 2023. It is responsible for:

- assisting the Government, economic, social, financial, non-financial and monetary actors, as well as the population in combating money laundering, terrorist financing and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and sensitizing them on the need for such action;
- proposing any measure likely to facilitate the implementation, by Cameroon, of decisions adopted by regional and international bodies engaged in combating money laundering, terrorist financing and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction;
- supporting the National Agency for Financial Investigation in coordinating and monitoring the self and peer evaluation of the mechanism to combat money laundering, terrorist financing and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction;
- making proposals for the drafting of appropriate regulations for combating money laundering, terrorist financing and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, in accordance with international guidelines;
- ensuring better coordination of government services involved in the fight against money laundering, terrorist financing and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction;
- fostering consultations between various professions, public or private sector services, or entities subject to laws and regulations governing the fight against money laundering, terrorist financing, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction;
- preparing all documentation deemed necessary for informing the authorities or officials authorized to represent Cameroon at meetings of bodies responsible for combating money laundering, terrorist financing and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction;

- conducting risk assessments and formulate the national strategy for combating money laundering, terrorist financing and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction;
- fostering the strengthening of requisite facilities for combating money laundering, terrorist financing and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction
- supervising designated non-financial institutions and professions without a regulatory body for the fight against money laundering, terrorist financing and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction;
 - contributing to the promotion of dialogue between the government and development partners to secure their technical and financial support for the implementation of policies to combat money laundering, terrorist financing and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

4: Coordinating Bodies in the Fight against Trafficking in and Smuggling of Persons

37- In order to better coordinate the fight against trafficking in and smuggling of persons, some bodies were set up within Government Departments and then between Government Departments and civil society. These are regional committees for the coordination of sector interventions in favour of the prevention and fight against trafficking in and smuggling of persons. They were set up by Order No.10/CAB/PM of 10 February 2023. A platform for discussions between the Government of Cameroon and the civil society regarding the fight against trafficking in and smuggling of persons was set up by Order No. 9/CAB/PM of 10 February 2023.

Section 3: Normative Developments

38- In addition to institutional developments, normative developments were also registered during the period under review. Several aspects of Law drew the attention of lawmakers who endorsed the ratification of several international instruments.

§1: Ratification of Instruments

39- International, regional and bilateral instruments were ratified.

A: International Instruments Ratified

40- Cameroon ratified the following instruments:

- the African-Eurasian Migratory Water bird Agreement (AEWA) signed on 15 August 1996 at the Hague, ratified by Decree No. 2019/587 of 31 October 2019;
- the amendment of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer adopted in Kigali on 16 October 2019, ratified by Decree No. 2019/582 of 31 October 2019;
- the multilateral convention to implement tax treaty related measures to prevent base erosion and profit shifting adopted in Paris on 24 November 2016, ratified by Decree No. 2020/798 of 29 December 2020;
- the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products;

- the Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur Protocol on Liability and Redress relating to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety adopted on 15 October 2010 in Nagoya, ratified by Decree No. 2020/208 of 29 December 2020;
- the Agreement on the Conservation of Gorillas and Their Habitats, adopted on 26 October 2007 in Paris (France), ratified by Decree No. 2020/397 of 27 July 2020;
- the international convention for the control and management of ships' ballast water and sediments (BWM Convention) adopted on 13 February 2004 in London (England), ratified by Decree No. 2020/240 of 28 April 2020;
- The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the rights of the child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, ratified by Decree No. 2020/2 of 6 January 2020;
- the Statute of the Women Development Organization in the Member States of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, ratified by Decree No. 2020/396 of 27 July 2020;
- the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes adopted on 17 March 1992 in Helsinki, ratified by Decree No. 2021/754 of 28 December 2021;
- Agreement on the establishment of the International Network for Bamboo and Rattan adopted in Beijing on 6 November 1997 by Decree No. 2021/780 of 28 December 2021;
- the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, ratified by Decree No. 2021/751 of 28 December 2021;
- The Budapest Convention on Cybercrime adopted on 23 November 2001, ratified by Decree No. 2022/169 of 23 May 2022;
- the Protocol Amending the Marrakech Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization by inserting the Agreement of 17 June 2022 on Fisheries Subsidies in Annex 11, ratified by Decree No. 2024/334 of 24 July 2024;
- the United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness adopted respectively on 28 September 1954 and 30 August 1961 in New-York, ratified by Decree No. 2024/333 of 24 July 2024;
- The OACPS-EU Partnership Agreement signed in Samoa on 15 November 2023, ratified by Decree No. 2024/332 of 24 July 2024;
- The WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty adopted in Geneva, Switzerland on 20 December 1996, ratified by Decree No. 2024/331 of 24 July 2024;
- the International Convention for the Protection of Performers, Producers of Phonograms and Broadcasting Organisations adopted in Roma, Italy, on 26 October 1961, ratified by Decree No. 2024/330 of 24 July 2024;
- the WIPO Copyright Treaty adopted in Geneva, Switzerland on 20 December 1996, ratified by Decree No. 2024/336 of 24 July 2024;
- the Beijing Treaty on Audiovisual Performances adopted on 24 June 2012 in Beijing (China), by Decree No. 2025/8 of 6 January 2025;
- Convention of the Organisation of The Islamic Conference on Combating International Terrorism signed on 1 July 1999 in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso), by Decree No. 2025/7 of 6 January 2025;

- Convention on the International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation adopted on 28 February 2020 in Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia), ratified by Decree No. 2025/6 of 6 January 2025;
- Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement on Appellations of Origin and Geographical Indications adopted in Geneva on 20 May 2015.

B: Regional Instrument Ratified

41- The following regional instruments were ratified:

- the African Charter of Values and Principles of Decentralization, Local Governance and Local Development, ratified by Decree No. 2019/583 of 31 October 2019;
- Agreement establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area, adopted in Kigali in March 2018, ratified by Decree No. 2019/586 of 31 October 2019;
- the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption adopted in Maputo (Mozambique) on 11 July 2003, by Decree No. 2020/166 of 1 April 2020;
- Agreement establishing the African Trade Insurance Agency, signed on 18 May 2000, ratified by Decree 2020/3 of 6 January 2020;
- the Treaty establishing the Inter-African Conference on Social Security adopted on 14 February 2014 in Abidjan, ratified by Decree No. 2020/239 of 28 April 2020;
- The Protocol to the ACHPR on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, ratified by Decree No. 2021/753 of 28 December 2021⁸;
- the multilateral convention on social security of the Inter-African Conference on Social Welfare (CIPRES) adopted in Dakar on 22 February 2006, ratified by Decree No. 2022/311 of 20 July 2022;
- the Protocol to the ACHPR on the Rights of Older Persons in Africa, ratified by Decree No. 2021/752 of 28 December 2021;⁹
- the Marrakech Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled, by Decree No. 2021/250 of 27 April 2021

C: Sub-Regional Instruments

42- The following regional instruments were ratified:

- the Cooperation Agreement in Matters of Criminal Police between Central Africa States, signed on 18 September 2015 in Yaounde, ratified by Decree No. 2020/797 of 29 December 2020;
- The Revised Treaty establishing the Economic Community of Central African States signed on 18 December 2019 in Libreville, ratified by Decree No. 2020/238 of 28 April 2020;
- the Cooperation Agreement in Matters of Criminal Police between Central Africa and East Africa States, ratified by Decree No. 2025/4 of 6 January 2025.

⁸ Ratification instruments were deposited on 8 September 2023

⁹ Ratification instruments were deposited on 8 September 2023

D: Bilateral Instruments

43- The following bilateral instruments were ratified:

- the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Cameroon and the Government of the United Arab Emirates relating to air services between their respective territories and beyond signed on 10 March 2020 in Dubai, ratified by Decree No. 2020/799 of 29 December 2020;
- the Agreement on migration issues between the Government of the Republic of Cameroon and the Swiss Federal Council, signed on 26 September 2014, ratified by Decree No. 2020/800 of 29 December 2020;
- the Extradition Agreement between the Republic of Cameroon and the Federative Republic of Brazil on 3 September 2019, ratified by Decree No.2021/243 of 27 April 2021;
- the Agreement between the Republic of Cameroon and the Federative Republic of Brazil on the Transfer of Persons Sentenced to Deprivation of Liberty ratified by Decree No.2021/244 of 27 April 2021
- the Treaty between the Republic of Cameroon and the United Arab Emirates for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Tax Evasion in respect of Income Tax, ratified by Decree No.2021/246 of 27 April 2021;
- the General Cooperation Agreement between the Republic of Cameroon and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, signed in Yaounde on 10 November 2021, ratified by Decree No. 2023/29 of 17 January 2023;
- the 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, ratified by Decree No. 2023/314 of 1 August 2023;
- the Framework Cooperation Agreement between Cameroon and the Eastern Republic of Uruguay, ratified by Decree No. 2023/315 of 1 August 2023;
- the Air Transport Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Cameroon and the Government of Canada, signed in Yaounde on 1 June 2022, ratified by Decree No. 2024/329 of 24 July 2024
- the Bilateral Air Services Agreement between Cameroon and South Africa, signed in Cape Town, South Africa on 14 July 2011, ratified by Decree No. 2024/335 of 24 July 2024.

§2: Legislative Developments

44- Apart from the significant strides made in the area of specific rights with Law No. 2023/9 of 25 July 2023 to institute the charter on child online protection in Cameroon, the legal framework of some civil and political rights, of the right to environment and of economic, social and cultural rights also evolved during the period under review.

A- Civil and Political Rights

45- Concerning identification and the right to private life, Law No. 2024/16 of 23 December 2024 to organize the civil registration system in Cameroon and Law No. 2024/17 of 23 December 2024 relating to personal data protection in Cameroon were adopted. The first law

notably provides modalities for the transcription of customary marriages and the second supports technological developments and establishes a personal data protection authority.

46- Concerning the right to liberty and security, Law No. 2022/17 of 27 December 2022 relating to the suppression of piracy, terrorism and offences against the safety of maritime navigation and platforms and Law 2024/15 of 23 December 2024 governing civil protection in Cameroon were adopted.

47- As regards freedom of association, Law No. 90/53 relating to freedom of association was amended by Law No. 2021/22 of 16 December 2021 to subject political parties, trade unions, sports associations, non-governmental organizations, as well as inter-branch organizations to a special regime. Law No. 2021/23 of 16 December 2021 governing inter-branch organizations in Cameroon was also adopted.

48- Concerning freedom of circulation, infrastructure and means of transport were given specific attention through Law No. 2022/7 of 27 April 2022 relating to the protection of the National Roads Asset and Law No. 2023/10 of 25 July 2023 governing the railway sector in Cameroon. Also, an online visa system was set up by Law No. 2022/15 of 14 July 2022 to amend and supplement Law No. 97/12 of 10 January 1997 to lay down the conditions of entry, stay and exit for aliens in Cameroon and Decree No. 2023/147 of 2 March 2023 laid down its conditions of implementation.

49- As regards participation in the management of public affairs, volunteering was promoted through Law No. 2021/15 of 9 July 2021 to organize and promote volunteering in Cameroon and Law No. 2024/11 of 24 July 2024 to extend the term of office of members of the National Assembly was adopted. In a bid to strengthen the resources of RLAs, Law No. 2024/20 of 23 December 2024 on local taxation was adopted.

B- Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and Right to a Healthy Environment

50- The business environment was improved through several instruments including Law No. 2019/4 of 25 April 2019 governing social economy in Cameroon and Law No. 2019/21 of 24 December 2019 to lay down some rules governing credit activities in the banking and micro-finance sectors in Cameroon

51- As concerns the right to health, Law No. 2022/14 of 14 July 2022 relating to medically assisted reproduction in Cameroon, Law No. 2022/8 of 27 April 2022 relating to medical research involving human subjects in Cameroon and Law No. 2024/18 of 23 December 2024 relating to the organization and practice of traditional medicine in Cameroon were adopted.

52- Several developments were registered with regard to the right to education with the adoption of Law No. 2023/7 of 25 July 2023 on Higher Education policy in Cameroon, Decree No. 2023/337 of 8 August 2023 to lay down special rules and regulations governing research personnel and Decree No. 2023 /434 of 4 October 2023 to lay down the organization and functioning of Government Teacher Training Colleges.

53- Concerning the right to work and social security, in response to the increase in the cost of living, support measures were taken through Decree No. 2020/376 of 8 July 2020 to fix the coefficient for the upward revision of certain old-age and incapacity pensions as well as death

benefits granted by the National Social Insurance Fund and Decree No. 2020/802 of 30 December 2020 to harmonize the retirement age of civil servants.

54- Significant strides were made concerning the right to food through Law No. 2024/19 of 23 December 2024 to lay down the rules and regulations governing fisheries and aquaculture in Cameroon.

55- Concerning the right to culture, developments occurred through the adoption of the following laws:

- Law No. 2020/11 of 20 July 2020 to regulate artistic and cultural associations in Cameroon;
- Law No. 2021/24 of 16 December 2021 governing the organization and promotion of the book sector in Cameroon;
- Law No. 2024/1 of 24 July 2024 to regulate archives in Cameroon;

56- With regard to the right to environment, developments were made through the adoption of the following laws:

- Law No. 2019/8 of 25 April 2019 to institute the petroleum code;
- Law No. 2019/12 of 19 July 2019 to lay down the general framework for radiological and nuclear safety, nuclear security, civil liability and safeguards enforcement;
- Law No. 2021/14 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 utilization with Decree No. 2023/07526/PM of 6 October 2023 laying down its implementation conditions and regulatory instruments determining the institutional system thereof ¹⁰ ;
- Law No. 2023/14 of 19 December 2023 relating to the petroleum code;
- Law No. 2024/8 of 24 July 2024 to lay down forestry and wildlife regulations

57- This institutional, normative and strategic framework provides an environment that is conducive to the promotion and protection of Rights enshrined in the ACHPR and its Protocols.

¹⁰ The said instruments include: Order No. 111/PM of 6 October 2023 to lay down the organisation and functioning of the National Committee in charge of access and fair and equitable sharing of benefits from the use of genetic resources; Order No. 17/MINEPDED of 18 October 2023 to lay down the missions of the national centre for exchange of information on access and fair and equitable sharing of benefits from the use of genetic resources; Order No. 16/MINEPDED of 18 October 2023 to lay down the missions of National Focal Point for the access and fair and equitable sharing of benefits from the use of genetic resources.

PART A: 7TH, 8TH, 9TH PERIODIC REPORTS UNDER THE AFRICAN CHARTER ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS

58- This report examines the state of implementation of recommendations resulting from previous reports and the implementation of the ACHPR.

SUB-PART I: STATE OF IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS RELATING TO THE AFRICAN CHARTER ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS

59- In addition to general recommendations, the AComHPR issued other recommendations relating to civil and political rights, economic, social and cultural rights, to the rights of the family and vulnerable groups, as well as peoples' rights.

Section 1: General Recommendations

60- General recommendations focus on the obligation to promote Human Rights, measures taken to implement the ACHPR and legislative measures for the domestication of the provisions of this instrument.

§1: Measures Taken to Give Effect to the ACHPR (Article 62)

61- Cameroon submitted instruments of ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on 28 September 2023, as well as instruments for the ratification of the Protocol to the ACHPR on the Rights of Older Persons and the Protocol to the ACHPR on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on 8 September 2023.

§2: Legislative Measures to Domesticate Provisions of the ACHPR (Article 1)

62- Though Cameroon has adopted the monistic system where international law overrides national law (Article 45 of the Constitution), the State is progressively incorporating international Human Rights Law instruments into national laws to facilitate their application. To this effect, Article 24 of Decree No. 2012/389 of 19 September 2012 to organise the Ministry of Justice provides that the Department of Legislation is responsible for incorporating international conventions into national laws. For example, by adopting Law No. 2024/15 of 23 December 2024 governing civil protection, Cameroon internalised some provisions of the Kampala Convention.

63- Legislation on the fight against smuggling of and trafficking in persons, especially Law No. 2011/24 of 14 December 2011 and section 342-1 of the penal Code were implemented. Cameroon also has a law on the freedom of association, i.e. Law No. 90/53 of 19 December

1990, as amended and supplemented in some of its provisions by Law No. 99/11 of 20 July 1999 and by Law No. 2021/22 of 16 December 2021.

64- Thanks to the legislation on public freedoms¹¹, Human Rights defenders can carry out their activities freely and without fear of reprisal. In addition, instruments on safety and security are applicable to them. Therefore, it is not relevant to adopt a specific law related to the protection of these defenders.

65- In order to ensure the effectiveness of the implementation of Human Rights legislation, an assessment of results is carried out on various occasions, especially through the annual Report of the Ministry of Justice on Human Rights in Cameroon, periodic reports and capacity-building activities, or more especially through assessment reports.

§ 3: Obligation to Promote Human Rights (Article 25)

66- In addition to the information provided above on the progress of the CHRC's status (see §17), it can be mentioned that its budget consistently increased from CFAF 867,928,304¹² in 2019 to CFAF 4,796,000,000¹³ in 2024 (an increase of more than 550%), with additional resources allocated within the framework of budget increase, from CFAF 491,501,951¹⁴ in 2021 to CFAF 500,000,000¹⁵ in 2022, 2023 and 2024. This increase enabled the Commission to strengthen its workforce. It also received funds from national, regional and international partners.

Section 2: Recommendations related to Civil and Political Rights

67- In addition to the right to equality before the law and to equal protection of the law, these recommendations are related to the protection against discrimination, the right to life, the right to personal freedom and to protection against arbitrary detention, the right to fair trial, the right to receive information and freedom of expression, the right to freedom of association and meeting, the right to freedom of movement and the right to participate freely in the government of one's country.

§ 1: Protection against Discrimination (Article 2)

68- Submitted in July 2019 and defended in April 2022, Cameroon's 22nd and 23rd Periodic Reports under the International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination provide information on awareness-raising campaigns against discrimination

¹¹Law No. 90/53 of 19 December 1990 relating to freedom of association and subsequent amendments thereto, Law No. 90/56 of 19 December 1990 relating to political parties, Law No. 90/55 of 19 December 1990 to lay down regulations governing public meetings and processions, Law No. 90/52 of 19 December 1990 relating to freedom of mass communication, as amended and supplemented by Law No. 96-4 of 4 January 1996, Law No. 2010-13 of 21 December 2010 governing electronic communications in Cameroon (amended and supplemented by Law No. 2015/6 of 20 April 2015), Law No. 2015/7 of 20 April 2015 governing audiovisual communication in Cameroon, etc.

¹² About 1,325, 081. 38 Euros.

¹³ About 7,322, 137. 40 Euros.

¹⁴ About 750, 384. 65 Euros.

¹⁵ About 763, 358. 78 Euros.

(CERD/C/CMR/22-23, Par. 126, 193, 195, etc.). As part of these awareness-raising campaigns, various initiatives, were taken by public institutions and partners of the State of Cameroon.

69- The National Communication Council and the National Commission on the Promotion of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism (NCPBM) carried out several campaigns and held various meetings to fight against hate speech and promote the culture of living together. Thus, in April 2019, May 2021 and September 2024, the NCPBM held three conferences on living together, hate speech and inter/intra community conflicts. The Commission also organised an awareness-raising campaign on hate speech and xenophobia in 2021 and set up a platform of collaboration with CSOs which are active in the fight against hate speech and xenophobia in 2022.

70- From 10 to 12 May 2023, the University of Yaounde I organised a symposium on the theme “*Hate speech and violence in Cameroon: social origins, emerging forms and possible responses*”. The symposium provided an opportunity to discuss issues that arise in diverse forms of violence and hate speech, skills for addressing them and possible responses. In the same vein, the United Nations Regional Office for Africa (UNOCA) and the United Nations Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa (UNCHRD-CA) with the support of the Government of Cameroon, organised, a *regional conference of journalists and media professionals of Central Africa with the view to eradicating and advocating for effective support for the regional strategy to counter hate speech and incitement to hatred and violence* from 28 to 30 November 2023 in Douala. This meeting that brought together about twenty journalists, bloggers and civil society representatives was held after the “*Regional Forum on raising awareness and building the capacity of the media and communication regulatory bodies on the prevention of conflicts linked to hate speech and the fight against this phenomenon in Central Africa*”, jointly organised from 6 to 29 October 2021 in Douala by UNOCA and the Commission of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), with the support of the Cameroonian Government. The said Forum brought together journalists, social networks stakeholders and representatives of institutions that fight against hate speech.

§ 2: Right to Equality before the Law and to Equal Protection of the Law (Article 3)

71- To foster inclusive access to legal services, laws and regulatory instruments are published in English and French, the 2 official languages. The National School of Administration and Magistracy (ENAM) continued the annual admission of English-speaking Pupil Magistrates and Pupil Court Registrars as shown in the table below:

Table 1: Statistics on Special Recruitments of English-speaking Pupil Magistrates and Pupil Registrars from 2019 to 2024

SECTIONS	PM (J)	PM (A)	PM (Au)	PCR	TOTAL
2019	30	10	10	30	80
2020	30	10	10	30	80

2021	30	10	10	30	80
2022	30	10	10	30	80
2023	20	10	10	20	60
2024	10	10	10	20	50
TOTAL	210	80	80	220	430

Source: ENAM

Key: PM (J): Pupil Magistrates (Judicial), PM (A): Pupil Magistrates (Administrative), PM (Au): Pupil Magistrates (Audit), PCR: Pupil Court Registrars

72- Moreover, in July 2017, the Common Law Division of the Supreme Court was instituted and was functioning.

73- In November 2019, the Head of State instructed the recruitment of 500 Translators and Interpreters over a 5-year period, that is 100 Translators and Interpreters per year. Some of them were posted to courts and the central services of the Ministry of Justice, taking their number to 41 in 2024.

74- In courts where there are no Interpreters assigned, the services of *ad hoc* Interpreters are used, including for mother tongues. Thus, during proceedings which were the subject of Judgments No. 74/PD of 20 June 2023 (Case **E.M.T vs S.M**), 82/PD of 18 July 2023 (Case **Y.P.T. vs D.M.**), 85/PD of 1 August 2023 (Case **A.E.A.M. vs Z.N.J.B.**) and 98/PD of 3 October 2023 (Case **M.Z.P. against A.V.S.**) rendered by the *Tribunal de premier degré* of Ambam, parties were assisted by mother tongue Interpreters.

75- No binding instrument prohibits the judgment of civilians by military tribunals. Cameroon chose to assign the said tribunals which are made up of civil and military Judicial and Legal Officers all trained at ENAM, the mission to try some specific offences. On appeal, judgments delivered by military tribunals are heard by a collegiate bench presided by a civil Judicial Officer. In case there is an appeal before the Supreme Court, the case is heard by civil Judicial Officers only. Moreover, both military and civil, Magistrates are subjected to the standards of fair trial.

76- The Military Tribunal does not have competence to try minors as provided for in the Code of Military Justice and reiterated by Law No. 2022/17 of 27 December 2022 relating to the suppression of piracy, terrorism and offences against the safety of maritime navigation and platforms.

§ 3: Right to Life (Article 4)

77- Cameroon has been a de facto abolitionist State since 1989, but has maintained death penalty in its legislation mostly for deterrence. Offences punishable by the death penalty which are very few (about fifteen) are those that are particularly serious, such as terrorism. The Head

of State may decide to commute death sentences to life in prison, as he did through Decree No. 2020/193 of 15 April 2020.

78- In order to improve detention conditions, including those of inmates sentenced to death, during the period under review, the budget of the Penitentiary Administration was increased by more than 255%, from CFAF 8,971,823,000¹⁶ to CFAF 22,894,127¹⁷ in 2024; the intake capacity of prisons increased from 19,155 in 2019 to 20,955 in 2023; the penitentiary map was extended with the operationalisation of the Douala-Ngoma Central Prison; some of the infrastructure of about twenty prisons were rehabilitated while new ones were constructed for other prisons; hundreds of detainees were provided education or trained in some trades, etc. (**Part B 624§ , detention conditions**). The Douala-Ngoma Central Prison which has a capacity of 1,500 places, became operational in February 2022. It comprises 8 buildings, including 3 buildings of 2 storeys for male detainees, one building of 3 storeys for minors and women, a vocational training workshop, a kitchen, 4 cold storage rooms, 2 warehouses, a chapel, a mosque, 32 bathrooms and 27 toilets, a playground, a visiting room, an administrative block, etc.

§ 4: Right to Liberty and to Protection against Arbitrary Detention (Article 6)

79- In general, Cameroon’s legislation as well as administrative and judicial practices align with the Luanda Guidelines. Arrests and deprivation of liberty, are carried out only for the reasons provided for by law within specified time limits and procedures. . Persons arrested or deprived of their liberty are entitled to a set of rights, including the right to be informed of the reason for their arrest, to be treated with dignity and humanity, to be examined by a medical doctor, to a counsel, to apply for release or challenge the legality of the deprivation of liberty, including through the habeas corpus procedure. Decisions rendered by lower courts in habeas corpus proceedings may be subjected to appeal. Although it is not provided for by law, the Supreme Court declared, on the basis of jurisprudence, that appeals relating to habeas corpus¹⁸ could be filed before the Supreme Court. In 2022 and 2023, the judges granted 95 habeas corpus applications.

80- Illegal remand in custody and detention confer a right to compensation. Thus, in Decisions No. 1/CI of 29 March 2023 (**K.T.Y.A.** vs the State of Cameroon), No. 22/CI of 25 September 2024 (**A.M.D.** vs the State of Cameroon) and No. 23/CI of 25 September 2024 (**S.A.** vs the State of Cameroon), the Commission for Compensation for Illegal Detention instituted at the

¹⁶ About 13,697,4439.69. Euros.

¹⁷ About 34,952.86 Euros.

¹⁸ Thus, Judgment No. 55/P/CJ/CS of 17 June 2021, the Supreme Court ruled as follows: *On the admissibility of the appeal: whereas Section 37 (b) of Law No. 2006/16 of 29 December 2006 to law down the organisation and functioning of the Supreme Court states: “The Judicial Bench is competent to hear judicial appeals from lower courts which have become final in all cases where the application of law is questioned; Whereas, as a result, though the Criminal Procedure Code does not explicitly provide for appeals in habeas corpus proceedings, the application of law being questioned, appeal against rulings thereto must be admitted[...]; Whereas the habeas corpus procedure in appeal being similar to that of appeals against the Examining Magistrate’s ordinances provided for in Sections 274, 586 and 587 of the Criminal Procedure Code, the procedure followed in case of appeal made against the rulings of the Inquiry Control Chamber» to rulings in habeas corpus”.* It gave a similar ruling in the case subject of Ruling No. 28/P/CJ/CS of 18 March 2021.

Supreme Court, granted several requests, with damages ranging between CFAF 5,067,410¹⁹ and CFAF 50,000,000²⁰. From 2022 to 2024, this Commission rendered about fifty decisions.

81- In order to comply with Human Rights standards, detention centres had various registers²¹ in which information was recorded. Judicial, penitentiary and administrative authorities followed up to ensure the availability of these registers and the quality of their keeping. Death of a person in detention or violation of their rights results in an investigation. During initial and further training, Police, National Gendarmerie (**See §122 et seq**) and Penitentiary Administration personnel (**See §620**) were taught courses on Human Rights.

82- Judicial police units and prisons are regularly subject to judicial control (by Legal Departments) and administrative control (by those hierarchically responsible in the Police and Gendarmerie, and by the Inspectorate General of Penitentiary Administration-IGAPEN of MINJUSTICE). They are also visited by the CHRC and the Department of Human Rights and International Cooperation (DDHCI) of MINJUSTICE Shortcomings identified during these visits and controls were documented and addressed. In 2023, DDHCI carried out visits in 26 prisons²², CHRC 614 visits in detention centres (including prisons)²³ IGAPEN, 7 on-site controls²⁴.

§ 5: Right to Fair Trial (Article 7)

83- MINJUSTICE continued the dissemination of *Justitia* Magazine and the new organisational chart of the Supreme Court, subject of Law No. 2017/14 of 12 July 2017 which sets up a Common Law Division within the Judicial Bench. As part of support measures, in addition to the use of translators and interpreters (**see §73 and 74**), the budget of the said Court increased from CFAF 4,594,000,000²⁵ in 2019 to CFAF 5,427,000,000²⁶ in 2024 (an increase of 15.34%).

84- Given that costs related to legal aid depend on the number of sessions of legal aid commissions and the number of applications granted, a fixed budget cannot be set in advance. In practical terms, cost related to Court Registry are borne by the State which also pays the fees of counsels appointed by courts, as well as those of Bailiffs and costs related to legal expertise,

¹⁹ About 7, 736.50 Euros.

²⁰ About 76,219.51 Euros.

²¹Thus, prisons are required to keep the following registers, signed and initialled by the State Counsel: a prison register, the register of identification cards, the register of deposit and inventory of objects and valuables taken from detainees, the register of detainees' medical examinations, the register of punishments, the register of the inventory of furniture, equipment and various objects existing in the prison and necessary for its functioning, the register of in prisons in default of payment , the register relating to the use of prison labour, the file of all detainees and the food register (Article 24 of Decree No. 92/52 of 27 March 1992 on the prison system in Cameroon).

²²8 Central Prisons (Buea, Ebolowa, New-Bell, Bafoussam, Ngaoundere, Garoua, Bertoua, Maroua and Douala-Ngoma) and 18 Main Prisons (Mbanga, Nkongsamba, Edea, Yabassi, Mbouda, Dschang, Bafang, BaganteFoumbot, Foumban, Batouri, Yokadouma, Abong-Mbang, Guider, Banyo, Tibati, Meiganga and Monatele).

²³That is 8 at the Bench, 59 in the Adamawa, 55 in the Centre, 3 in the East, 106 in the Far North, 54 in the Littoral, 85 in the North, 162 in the North West, 28 in the West, 9 in the South and 45 in the South West.

²⁴ Main Prisons (Mbalmayo, Ngoumou, Monatele, Sa'a, Mfou and Yaounde) and the Yaounde Central Prison.

²⁵ About 7,013,740.45 Euros.

²⁶ About 8,285,496.18 Euros.

among others. For example, in 2022, 634 counsels were appointed by courts, including 183 before Courts of First Instance, 415 before High Courts and 36 before Courts of Appeal.

§ 6: Right to Receive Information and Freedom of Expression (Article 9)

85- Subject to compliance with prerequisites and fundamental principles²⁷, access to information and audiovisual communication remained free. This freedom fostered the proliferation of operators in the sector of audiovisual communication notably. Thus, in 2024, there were 760 authorised media outlets in Cameroon, including 93 television channels, 129 commercial radio stations, 169 community radio stations and 65 television broadcasting operators.

86- In line with measures taken to implement Article 9 of the ACHPR (see §85), Cameroon complied with the Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information in Africa. The Media collected, processed and disseminated information without hindrance, subject to liability in case of breaches. This compliance is reflected in the proliferation and diversity of the media space which in 2024, in addition to operators in the audiovisual communication sector, comprised about: 232 written press organs and 72 online press organs and 260 telecommunication operators²⁸.

§ 7: Right to Freedom of Association and Assembly (Articles 10 and 11)

87- Enshrined in the Constitution of Cameroon, these freedoms are guaranteed. In addition to developments on measures taken to implement Articles 10 and 11 of the ACHPR (§ 214 et seq), the framework in this area is broadly in line with the AComHPR Guidelines on Freedom of Association and Assembly. To take new challenges into account, this normative framework was progressively adapted as highlighted in the General Introduction.

88- In 2024, there were 48 religious associations in Cameroon, 368 political parties, 115 Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and thousands of other associations active in the promotion of Human Rights.

89- In accordance with Article 11 of ACHPR, possible restrictions to the right to assemble freely taken by the State are those provided for in its national legislation and are justified by the necessity to safeguard the interest of national security, the safety of others, the health, ethics or rights and freedoms of persons. Where such restrictions occur, any person interested may make use of domestic remedies, which are available and efficient.

90- Regarding the adoption of a specific law on the protection of Human Rights defenders and the guarantee of a safe working environment for them, see the above developments (see §64).

²⁷Such as public order and good morals, national defence requirements, human dignity, the republican form, the unity and territorial integrity of the State, as well as democratic principles that govern the Republic, the plural expression of schools of thought and opinion.

²⁸<https://www.art.cm/fr/exploitants?page=2>

§ 8: Right to Freedom of Movement (Article 12)

91- The State of Cameroon takes note of the recommendation and points out that if the local integration of long-standing refugees is one of the sustainable solutions that can be applied, it must notably take into account the persistence or not of the event that caused the displacement and the principle of the voluntary return (assisted or not) of refugees who no longer need international protection., Following the Tripartite Agreement between Cameroon, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (HCR) and the Central African Republic signed in June 2019, about 36,000 Central African refugees were voluntarily repatriated as at mid-June 2024²⁹. By 2027, the HCR envisages, among other things, the voluntary repatriation of 200,000 refugees settled in Cameroon.

§ 9: Right to participate in the Management of Public Affairs in One's Country (Article 13)

92- Though the State has not provided a quota per category of persons, it maintained its policy of inclusion reflected since 1982³⁰ through the institution of quota (revised) per region for competitive examinations, which makes it possible to take into account sociological components, including indigenous peoples.

93- Gender, language, disability and other vulnerabilities, are taken into account during recruitment into the Public Service, electoral processes and in the participation in the management of public affairs in general **See §92** . Regarding disability, Order No. 40/PM of 19 May 2022 to lay down terms and conditions for granting age exemption to persons with disabilities during competitive examinations and recruitment into public service was signed. It grants a maximum of 5 years beyond the age limit provided for in the instrument launching the examination or recruitment.

94- Technical and financial constraints related to the collection and use of statistical data do not make it possible to have exhaustive data on the number of women, girls, persons with disabilities or persons from indigenous minorities in positions of responsibility. Concerning women for example, their proportion in municipal executives, at the National Assembly and the Senate increased from 6.94% to 10.83% (2013 to 2020), from 31.11% to 33.89% (2013 to 2020) and from 26% to 33% (2018 to 2023) respectively. In 2020, in Regional Councils, there 210 women out of 900 elected representatives, representing 23.4% of Councillors.

²⁹ <https://www.unhcr.org/africa/fr/actualites/articles-et-reportages/reintegration-et-espoir-pour-les-rapatries-centrafricains-en>

³⁰ Order No. 10467/MFP/DC of 4 October 1982 on the application of the provisions of Decree No. 82-407 of 7 September 1982 to amend and supplement certain provisions of Decree No. 75-496 of 3 July 1975: General Regulations for Government competitive examinations. General rules and regulations of competitive examinations are now laid by Decree No. 2000/696/pm of 13 September 2000.

Section 3: Recommendations related to Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

95- These recommendations have to do with the right to property and housing, work, health and education.

§ 1: Right to Property/Right to Housing (Article 14)

96- Cameroon took note of the recommendation on the implementation of a policy of building social houses for vulnerable persons. Vulnerable persons were already taken into account in the social housing allocation policy. In its Article 18 (5), Decree No. 2018/6233/PM of 26 July 2018 fixing the procedures for the application of Law No. 2010/2 of 13 April 2010 on the protection and promotion of persons with disabilities in Cameroon provides that in the case of the availability of two (02) social housing units located at different levels in a built-up building, the person with a disability is allocated the dwelling on the lowest floor. Article 19 adds that persons with disabilities benefit from preferential measures to social housing consisting notably of lowering rents in public housing, the reduction of interest rates for loans granted by public bodies and intended for the purchase of undeveloped buildings or the construction of individual houses, priority allocation of social housing, when there is competition between a person with disabilities and an able person.

97- Moreover, the joint MINHDU/MINFI Order of 20 September 2024 on income ceilings to access social housings in Cameroon indicates that *in case of an emergency, social houses may also be allocated to people in need of public support*. It further states that *in case of competition, social houses shall be allocated in priority to students, young people under 35, persons with disabilities, displaced persons, victims of natural or accidental disasters, persons on-call, women in distress and to previous occupants of the premises who have been expropriated following the achievement of the social housing project*.

98- A law relating to the mining code was adopted (Law No. 2023/14 of 19 December 2023). Among other innovations, this Code increases the number the types of mining titles and strengthens the involvement of the State (through SONAMINES³¹) and Councils in mining activities). Law No. 2024/8 of 24 July 2024 to lay down forestry and wildlife regulations, lays emphasis on the sustainable conservation of ecosystems, the more rational use of natural resources and the safeguard of the rights of local communities.

99- As part of ongoing land reform, important regulatory acts were signed, such as Circular-Letters: No. 1/MINDCAF of 2 February 2022 prohibiting the recognition and acceptance of *attestations or certificates of abandonment of customary rights* within the framework of procedures for direct registration or registration by concession concerning national land; No. 2/MINDCAF of 2 February 2022 relating to modalities for the application of regulatory provisions concerning the acquisition, the occupation and use of private state land; and No. 2/MINDCAF/CAB/LC of 9 February 2024 to institute a certificate of ownership of customary land rights.

³¹Set up by Decree No. 2020/749 of 14 December 2020, its mission is to develop and promote the mining sector in Cameroon, except the hydrocarbons and quarry substances, and to manage the interests of the State in this field.

100- Land reform was at the centre of the Land Tenure Week in Cameroon 2024 Edition under the theme: *Land Governance and Sustainable Development Goals: challenges and perspectives*, which was held from 25 to 29 November 2024 in Yaounde. During the week, it was recalled that land reform is one of the Government's major projects, alongside the improvement of land governance or the digitalisation of the land register.

§ 2: Right to Work (Article 15)

101- Decree No. 2023/338/PM of 21 March 2023 increased the Guaranteed Minimum Wage (GMW) by 13.38% for State Employees governed by the Labour Code (from CFAF 36,270³² to 41,875)³³, by 19.4% (from CFAF 36,270 to 45,000³⁴) for the agricultural sector and related sectors, and by 36% (from CFAF 36,270 to 60,000³⁵) for other sectors of activities.

102- Various measures were taken to support the private and informal sector in the creation of employments See §275 and 286).

§ 3: Right to Health (Article 16)

103- The section below (see §871 et seq,) provides information on measures taken to guarantee the right to health, including the development of health system capacity, maternal and child health, and the fight against priority diseases (malaria, high blood pressure and tuberculosis). Although, the health budget was increasing, it did not yet account for 15% of the State budget in 2024, as recommended by the Abuja Declaration.

104- A National Health Development Plan-NHDP (2021-2025) was adopted, together with an Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (2021-2025)³⁶ the general aim of which is to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the NHDP. This integrated plan is a summary document containing the most relevant indicators, validated by key stakeholders in the healthcare sector. These indicators make it possible to monitor and evaluate results obtained and to take appropriate corrective actions. In the same vein, on 1 August 2024 in Yaounde, the 2nd HIV impact evaluation survey from August 2024 to February 2025 was launched. This survey which involved more than 15,000 randomly selected households, aimed at assessing the impact of HIV on the people of Cameroon, and update crucial HIV related indicators enabling informed decision-making.

§ 4: Right to Education (Article 17)

³² About 55.37 Euros

³³ About 63.93 Euros.

³⁴ About 68.70 Euros

³⁵ About 91.60 Euros.

³⁶Specific objectives are: to specify the institutional and organisational framework for monitoring and evaluating the NHDP at ministerial and inter-ministerial level; to provide institutions with tools for measuring progress; and to periodically measure progress at all levels.

105- Further strengthening of the education offer by the State contributed to the increase of the demand for education, the improvement of the quality of teaching, thus making it possible to achieve overall satisfactory results at all levels of education (see § 382 et seq).

Section 4: Recommendations related to the Rights of the Family and Vulnerable Groups (Article 18-4)

106- Information provided in this single Report sets out measures taken to guarantee the rights and ensure the well-being of persons with disabilities and older persons, including the most disadvantaged (see § 588 et seq). For example, with regard to strengthening the normative and institutional framework, Decree No. 2020/632 of 19 October 2020 to lay down the establishment, organisation and functioning of the Maroua Centre for the Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities and Decree No. 2020/376 of 8 July 2020 to fix the coefficient for the upward revision of certain old-age and incapacity pensions as well as death benefits granted by the National Social Insurance Fund can be cited. Moreover, the needs of persons with disabilities are taken into account in the allocation of social housing (see §96 et seq).

Section 5: Implementation of Recommendations related to People's Rights

107- Recommendations related to peoples' rights concern the rights of all peoples to the same rights, self-determination, freely dispose of their wealth and natural resources and to a satisfactory general environment, as well as the right to economic, social and cultural development.

§ 1: Rights of all Peoples to the Same Rights (Article 19)

108- In order to take better account of customary land rights, including those of indigenous peoples, the Minister of State Property, Surveys and Land Tenure issued Circular Letter No. 2/MINDCAF/CAB/LC of 9 February 2024 *establishing a certificate of ownership of administratively recognised customary land rights as part of the procedure for processing applications for direct registration of the national land that are occupied and/or used with a view to obtaining a land title.*

109- It validates the recognition by the land consultative board of the beneficiary's ownership of customary land rights, and is drawn up by MINDCAF Divisional Delegation based on information recorded in the board's administrative and technical reports. This certificate which renders the plot of land concerned administratively unavailable until the registration procedure is completed, attests to the reality of this ownership and the imminent transfer of the plot from the status of national land to the status of land owned by the beneficiary.

§ 2: Right to Self-Determination (Article 20)

110- Resources meant for decentralisation substantially increased. It increased from CFAF 49,800,000,000³⁷ in 2019 to CFAF 292,500,000,000³⁸ in 2024, while the budget of the Ministry of Decentralisation and Local Development (MINDDEVEL), which stood at CFAF

³⁷ About 76,030,534.35 Euros.

³⁸ About 446,564,885.50 Euros.

44,447,000,000³⁹ in 2019 increased to CFAF 100,052,335,556⁴⁰ (that is a more than 100% increase), including CFAF 36,000,000,000⁴¹ for the support to the implementation of projects for the 360 Councils and CFAF 4,000,000,000⁴² for the 14 City Councils.

111- In addition, the adoption of Law No. 2019/24 of 24 December 2019 to institute the General Code of regional and local authorities made it possible to take into account the specificities of the North West and South West Regions with, notably, the institution of Public Independent Conciliators⁴³ in charge of settling disputes between users and the regional and local councils, and the House of Chiefs. The latter gives its opinion on issues relating to the status of traditional chieftaincy, the management and conservation of sites, monuments and historical relics, the organisation of cultural and traditional events in the region and the collection and translation of oral tradition, etc.

§ 3: Right to Freely Dispose of Wealth and Natural Resources and Right to a General Satisfactory Environment (Articles 21 and 24)

112- A new mining code was adopted (see § 56 and 98). In the extractive sector, including mining, although a register of licences, a mining registry and a register of beneficial owners searchable online are not currently available, Cameroon published 5 EITI Reports⁴⁴ that provide information notably on ultimate owners of companies that bid for, operate or invest in extractive assets, the State's shareholding in extractive companies and major exploration activities for mineral substances in Cameroon.

113- With the participation of CSOs and international partners, the State organised several campaigns to raise public awareness on behaviours that can help protect the environment. From 2019 to 2022, the Ministry of Environment, Nature Protection and Sustainable Development sensitised the population on the management of the Bakassi mangrove ecosystem, on bush fire and abusive logging on developed sites on the banks of the Benoue River and the management of polychlorinated biphenyls.

§ 4: Right to Economic, Social and Cultural Development (Article 22)

114- Information provided in this combined Report highlights measures taken to achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, in various fields.

³⁹ About 67,858,015.27 Euros.

⁴⁰ About 152,751,657.34 Euros.

⁴¹ About 54,961,832,06 Euros.

⁴² About 6,106,870.23 Euros.

⁴³ Appointed by Decree No. 2021/342 of 10 June 2021.

⁴⁴ <https://eiticameroon.org/>

SUB-PART II:

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AFRICAN CHARTER ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS

115- Measures were taken to ensure the enjoyment of civil and political rights, social, economic and cultural rights, rights of specific groups and people's rights. Protection against racial discrimination and duties under the ACHPR were also given particular attention.

CHAPTER 1: CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS

116- In order to guarantee civil and political rights for all, in a fluctuating political, economic and social context, the State implemented its obligation to promote and protect non-discrimination and equality of all before the law, the right to life, the right to physical integrity and the right not to be subjected to torture, the right to respect of human dignity. It also ensured the protection against slavery and trafficking in persons. Moreover, the right to liberty and security, the right to fair trial, the principle of legality of offences and sanctions, the freedom of conscience and religion, the freedoms of expression and communication, the freedom of association and assembly, the right to move freely and choose one's residence, to leave the country and seek asylum and the right to participate in the management of public affairs were also guaranteed.

Section 1: Non-discrimination and Equality of All before the Law (Articles 2 and 3)

117- The implementation of Articles 2 and 3 of the Charter, which are enshrined in the Constitution of Cameroon was carried out through some measures that enabled the consolidation of the enjoyment of rights and freedoms without any distinction of any kind, such as physical appearance, belief, age or gender, race, ethnic group, language, religion or political opinion.

118- In this vein, Law No. 2019/20 of 24 December 2019 to amend and supplement certain provisions of Law No. 2016/7 of 12 July 2016 relating to the Penal Code was enacted. Sanctions are provided in Sections 241 and 241-1 (new) for contempt of race or religion and contempt of tribe or ethnic group respectively. Sanctions are provided for hate speech.

119- Awareness-raising activities were also organised by the State, including campaigns on citizenship during festivities relating to the celebration of Youth Day on 11 February and of National Day on 20 May each year. The State also gave its support to initiatives by the civil society, such as the "Equality and dignity" initiative with the Cameroon Human Rights League in 2020, the solidarity and non-discrimination programme with Amnesty International in 2021, the "Diversity and inclusion" campaigns with the collaboration of the Association for the promotion of diversity and inclusion in 2022 or the initiative "Equality for all" with international partners such as Human Rights Watch in 2023.

Section 2: Right to Life, Physical Integrity and Right not to be subjected to Torture (Article 4)

120- Some actions were carried out in order to guarantee the right to physical integrity and the fight against torture

§1: Right to Physical Integrity

121- The physical integrity of individuals was protected by preventing violations and sanctioning perpetrators. Prevention was carried out through capacity-building of personnel in charge of applying the law within the framework of initial or continuous training, and through respect of town planning standards.

122- A 30-hour module on Human Rights was maintained in the training of Pupil Magistrates and of Pupil civil, land and labour Administrators. Moreover, these students also attended a 3-day seminar on International Humanitarian Law and on the consideration of Human Rights counter-terrorism proceedings. They were also taught a 30-hour course on Human Rights Litigation. Pupil Magistrates of the Common Law Section (judicial and administrative) were also taught the same course.

123- Modules on Human Rights, International Humanitarian Law, Prohibition of torture, Rights of the child and protection of women and children in a context of armed conflict continued to be taught at National Police training centres. The Humanitarian Law module was maintained in the curricula of National Gendarmerie Training Centres and at the Combined Services Military Academy (EMIA).

124- Moreover, Magistrates, Police Officers, Gendarmes, Defence forces and Penitentiary Administration Personnel attended several continuous training sessions, the general objective of which was a better mastery of respect of Human Rights in the exercise of their duties. In 2019, MINJUSTICE, with the support of UNICEF, trained 46 Judicial and Legal Officers, 19 Police Officers and 19 Penitentiary Administration Personnel on the rights of the child, especially children in contact with the law. Moreover 2,272 Police Officers were trained on gender-based violence in the context of crisis and on the protection of refugees and displaced persons.

125- MINJUSTICE, with the support of the United Nations Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa, trained about 30 Judicial and Legal Officers, Gendarmes and Penitentiary Administration personnel on the drafting and presentation of Reports to Human Rights Treaty Bodies. In 2023, ENAM, in collaboration with the University *Sant'Anna de Pisa* in Italy, organised a training session from 20 to 22 March for about 20 Magistrates on offences under International Law with a focus on the protection of victims and the rights of target groups through international cooperation measures in criminal matters. On 16 and 17 October in Garoua, 17 Judicial and Legal Officers and 7 Lawyers of the Adamawa, North and Far North Regions were trained on “the protection of victims and witnesses in criminal proceedings”. Also, in the Far North and South West Regions, 90 Police Officers were

trained on techniques and methods of investigation, assistance and follow-up as part of the handling of cases of violence against women and children.

126- Some 250 National Gendarmerie personnel from the Adamawa, Far North, Littoral, North West and South West Regions attended 7 training sessions organised within the framework of dialogue with CICR. Some more 1,100 personnel of the Gendarmerie attended training sessions on Human Rights organised by the National Gendarmerie. On 29 and 30 April 2024, a training seminar on guarantees of the right to liberty and security was organised for Judicial and Legal Officers, Penitentiary Administration Personnel and Social Workers.

127- Taking into account recurrent collapses caused by the poor quality of some buildings and those under construction⁴⁵, the MINTP signed Circular No. 93 of 8 February 2022 to remind private civil engineering laboratories of their responsibility to issue geotechnical documents. These are reliability studies and analysis reports, as well as other documents that guarantee the quality of the soil on which any construction is supposed to be carried out. The quality of these documents allows to avoid the subsidence of soils, the degradation of roads or the collapse of buildings during or after construction. This topic was on the agenda of the Cabinet Meeting of 24 February 2022 during which the Head of Government instructed the Minister of Housing and Town Planning to work in collaboration with the Minister of Decentralisation and Local Development in order to raise awareness among municipal executives on the necessity to operationalise Committees in charge of checking administrative urban planning documents to make sure that buildings erected in areas under their authority comply with relevant standards.

128- On 16 April 2023, a landslide buried 2 people in the Nyalla neighbourhood. On 26 September 2023, in the Nkolbong neighbourhood in Douala, a landslide caused the death of 2 persons. On 8 October 2023, a landslide in Mbankolo, Yaounde caused the death of 28 persons and injured 17. On 5 November 2024, two landslides occurred at the Dschang cliff killing 17 people.

129- During the interministerial meeting of 11 October 2023, the Head of Government prescribed the following measures: Coordination of relief actions, psychological care for victims, eviction from risk areas⁴⁶ and cessation of the issuance of land titles in those areas. So, in a Communique of 17 October 2023, the Minister of State Property, Surveys and Land Tenure (MINDCAF) announced that 2 land titles fraudulently obtained on sites near the place where the landslide occurred in Mbankolo were cancelled.

130- With regard to road safety, stringent measures such as visits on the field, reform of the issuance of driving licences and certificates of road worthiness, the acquisition of fix radars, enabled the reduction of the number of deaths due to road accidents. In 2020, there were 7,303 road accidents that killed 3,043 people and injured 594. In 2023, the National Gendarmerie registered 1,841 highway accidents that caused the death of 731 people and

⁴⁵ On 9 June 2022 in Batouri, 5 people were killed in a landslide; on 27 November 2022, in Yaounde, in the neighbourhood of Rond -point Damase, 15 people were also killed in a landslide and 4 others were injured.

⁴⁶ In a Communique of 11 October 2023, the Senior Divisional Officer for the Mfoundi Division asked the residents of Ebama, Ngousso to leave that area after serious cracks were identified.

injured 2,051. DGSN registered a total of 6,866 highway accidents that caused the death of 509 people and injured 664. The Minister of Transport also sanctioned public transport operators by suspending the activities of some companies and the driving licences of those responsible for road accidents.

131- Disciplinary and criminal proceedings were initiated following allegations of the violation of the right to physical integrity and where appropriate, sanctions were passed against law enforcement personnel. During the reference period, 213 administrative sanctions were passed against the police personnel.

132- With regard to prosecution, some cases were disposed of.

133- On 6 May 2020, the Mbam-et Inoubou High Court, in determining on the merits the case concerning **IBRAHIM BELLO**, declared the two accused policemen guilty of torture and grievous harm. First grade Police Inspector **D.S.J.**, was sentenced to 4 years in prison and Police Officer **B.N.** was sentenced to a suspended 3-year in prison term. They were also sentenced to jointly pay the sum of CFAF 50,000,000⁴⁷ as damages to the civil party. Moreover, on 21 September 2020, the Yaounde Military Tribunal delivered its judgment on the merits in the case against Lieutenant **F.E.** and Sergeant **B.C.H.** and First Class Soldiers **D.G.B.**, **T.C.J.B** and **N.F.G.L.** who were involved in the murder of 2 women and 2 children in Zeleved in the Mayo Moskota Sub-Division, Far North Region of Cameroon in 2015. The first 4 persons were each sentenced to 10 years in prison for violating instructions, capital murder and for being an accessory, while the last was sentenced to 2 years in prison for violating instructions. The court decision was appealed against by the Legal Department on 30 September 2020.

134- Proceedings were underway as regards the events that took place in Ngarbuh in Ntubaw in the North West Region. On 14 February 2020, some members of DSF, with some members of a Mbororo vigilante committee retaliated following an attack from separatists during a patrol in the Ngarbuh neighbourhood. During the crossfire that ensued, some civilians, including 3 women and 10 children were killed. Investigations ordered by the President of the Republic enabled the determination of the circumstances of these deaths and the prosecution of the accused persons before the Yaounde Military Tribunal. Adjournments in the case were not a denial of justice. They were made in a bid to comply with the procedure, especially the fact that 2 Assessors must obligatorily be present to ascertain that the composition of the court is lawful.

135- With regard to the killing of 7 students on 24 October 2020 at the *Mother Francisca International Academy* of Kumba, **K.P.T**, **R.L.M.**, **Y.L.** and **E.K.E.** were found guilty of hostilities against the Fatherland, secession, acts of terrorism, capital murder, illegal possession of firearms and defensive ammunitions and sentenced to death penalty by shooting in public by the Buea Military Tribunal. However, it is worth mentioning that Section 22 (1 and 2) of the Penal Code provides that: *“Every sentence of death shall be submitted to the President of the Republic for his decision on commutation. No death*

⁴⁷ About 76,335.88 Euros

sentence may be executed until the President shall have signified his decision not to commute”.

§2: Fight against Torture

136- By Circular No. 190256/DV/MINDEF/01 of 18 January 2019 addressed to all defence and security services under his authority, the Minister of Defence reiterated the State’s strategic guidelines concerning the fight against torture. This Circular-letter provides that: “(...) Whosoever commits acts of torture, authorises them, is an accomplice or tacitly authorises them shall be personally liable before the law”.

137- This reminder was followed:

- by instructions relating to the opening of investigations and commencement of proceedings against perpetrators, including those in command positions;
- instructions relating to the cessation of illegal detention;
- opening of a central register of persons arrested and detained which can be consulted by families;
- authorisation of access to detention places, under the control of Human Rights observers.

138- Through the same Circular-letter, the Minister of Defence also gave specific instructions to military officials in the Far North, North West, and South West Regions to ensure continuous and permanent training on the use of force, in particular during manifestations, for all personnel under their authority, in compliance with the United Nations Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials. He also prescribed that they ensure that soldiers against whom there are allegations of excessive use of force, extrajudicial executions, ill-treatment and arbitrary and false arrest, are effectively prosecuted and sanctioned; and a periodic report submitted to hierarchy on all cases.

139- As part of its missions, the National Mechanism for the Prevention of Torture of the Cameroon Human Rights Commission, shall “*carry out regular visits to all places of detention; initiate constructive dialogue with the authorities in charge of the administration and management of places of detention or any other authority; participate in monitoring the implementation of the observations made by the United Nations Subcommittee on the Prevention of torture ; detainees,ect; make recommendations to the competent authorities to improve the treatment and situation of detainees and to prevent torture...*”⁴⁸. So, on 30 April 2021, the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture, which is made up of 4 Commissioners, including a Medical Doctor, was set up within the CHRC. Between July and September 2021, the CHRC carried out visits in 16 judicial police units, 9 prisons and a psychiatric hospital in the North, Far North, West, Littoral, South West and South Regions and in Jamot Hospital in the Centre Region. Moreover, thanks to the reports made by the CHRC, several persons who were arbitrarily detained were released, including 6 in the South West Region. In 2023, the CHRC carried out a total of 614 visits in places of detention.

⁴⁸ Sections 8 and 9 of Law No. 2019/14 of 19 July 2019 on the establishment, organisation and functioning of the Cameroon Human Rights Commission.

140- Also, on the occasion of the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Protocol to the United Nations Convention against Torture, an interregional conference was organised by the Association for the prevention of torture from 10 to 12 October in Yaounde, on the theme: “*Advancing the prevention of torture in Central Africa and East Africa*”. During this meeting, awareness was raised among States that were hesitant to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (OPCAT)

141- On 13 and 14 November 2024, the Committee against torture examined Cameroon’s 6th Periodic Report relating to the Convention against torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment. The recommendations issued during the said review were being implemented. The procedure relating to the deposit of OPCAT ratification instruments was being finalised.

142- Criminal response was illustrated by the opening of investigations (37 reports), prosecution and sanctioning of perpetrators of torture. To illustrate, the case of police officers arrested and brought before the Yaounde-*Centre Administratif* State Counsel’s Chambers can be mentioned. The accused persons, **N.F.J.M**, **K.D**, **A.A.A**, **N.K.M** and **K.P** were brought to the said Chambers on 24 September 2021 in relation with the **TCHOUMI Cyrille** case and were prosecuted before the court for torture and ill-treatment. On 6 December 2021, they were sentenced to imprisonment terms and fines. Also, by Judgment No. 106/CRIM/23 of 15 March 2023, Police Officers **L.M.** and **Y.N.** were found guilty of false arrest and violation of instructions (behaviour likely to tarnish the image of the Police). They were sentenced to 2 years in prison, suspended for 3 years and to jointly pay the sum of CFAF 4,500,000⁴⁹ to the victim as damages. On 27 August 2024, an investigation was ordered by SED after Barrister **Richard TAMFU**, a Cameroonian Lawyer registered with the Cameroon Bar Association suffered violence in the hands of the National Gendarmerie personnel.

Section 3: Fight against Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Persons (Article 5)

143- On 7 April 2021, the Ministry of Social Affairs published the National Survey on the Assessment of Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants in Cameroon. This survey was part of the project termed “Situational Assessment of the Phenomenon of Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants in Cameroon” which was executed by the Ministry of Social Affairs in collaboration with the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The survey identified the most common forms of trafficking in persons, routes most used by traffickers, the legal framework and prosecution. Some recommendations were also issued in order to better fight against trafficking in and smuggling of persons. A plan of action is appended to the survey among other things.

144- Moreover, in the context of the Project, MINAS, MINPROFF and IOM organised 3 awareness-raising campaigns on trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants from 10 to 26 December 2021, in Bertoua, Garoua-Boulai and Yaounde respectively. Through these campaigns, the awareness of about 10,000 people was raised, including students, prostitutes, merchants, motorcycle taxi drivers, footballers, travel agency promoters, women’s associations

⁴⁹ About 6,870.23 Euros.

leaders, administrative, as well as religious and traditional authorities. Also, awareness-raising posters on the fight against trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants were put up on 18 March 2024 at the Yaounde International Airport and on 16 July 2024 at the Douala International Airport.

145-The MINAS toll-free number (1503) to report cases of trafficking in and smuggling of persons was officially launched on 18 January 2022 together with the temporary listening and transit centre for migrants. The centre is also meant to welcome victims of trafficking in persons.

146- Moreover, a new module on organised crime was included in the new training programme for Judicial Police Officers (JPO) of the National Gendarmerie. This module includes specific chapters on trafficking in and smuggling of persons.

147- As concerns the repression of these offences, courts continued to render decisions. From the analysis of decisions rendered, smuggling of persons concerns all the regions of the country especially around neighbouring countries such as Nigeria and Equatorial Guinea. As regards trafficking in persons, the percentage of labour exploitation is higher than that of sexual exploitation and destination countries are neighbouring countries or distant countries such as Middle East countries. It is necessary to give a new direction to the repressive policy so that victims can increasingly be taken into consideration through the award of appropriate reparations. There is also a need to strengthen judicial cooperation, as victims generally fall prey to well organised criminal networks, the intention of which are difficult to evidence in some cases.

148- By Judgment No. 258/CRIM of 8 August 2019, the Wouri High Court found **N.D.M.** guilty of smuggling of persons and sentenced him to 20 years in prison. On 21 May 2021, the High Court of the Ntem Valley rendered a decision in which it found **M.A.** guilty of smuggling of and trafficking in persons and sentenced him to 5 years in prison and to a fine of CFAF 100,000⁵⁰; while **O.M.C.N.** and **O.M.M.** were each sentenced to 20 months in prison for the same offences. On 20 January 2022, the Mayo-Sava High Court sentenced **K.N.** to 18 years in prison and a fine of CFAF 800,000⁵¹ for smuggling of and trafficking in persons. On 2 February 2022, the same court found **F.S.** and **T.N.** guilty of the same offences and sentenced them to 2 years in prison and a fine of CFAF 100,000 each. In Judgement No. 224/CRIM of 29 November 2022, the Vina High Court sentenced **O.B.** to 2 years in prison suspended for 3 years and a fine of CFAF45,000⁵². By 2 judgments No. 38/CRIM of 18 June and No. 36/CRIM of 11 July 2022, the Nyong et So'o High Court sentenced **M.M.M.** to 5 years in prison and fine CFAF90,000⁵³ CFAF40,000⁵⁴ for aggravated smuggling of persons.

Section 4: Right to Liberty and Security (Article 6)

149- Through their decisions, courts sanctioned perpetrators of violation of the right to liberty and security and awarded damages where necessary. Illegal deprivation of liberty was

⁵⁰ About 152.67 Euros.

⁵¹ About 1,221.37Euros.

⁵² About 68.70 Euros

⁵³ About 137.40 Euros.

⁵⁴ About 61.06 Euros.

contested through the habeas corpus procedure and victims had the opportunity to file their cases before the Commission for compensation of victims of illegal detention.

§1: Legal Sanctions against Persons who violate the Right to Liberty

150- In 2019, there were 49 cases of kidnapping by fraud and 63 of kidnapping of a child at preliminary inquiry and 84 cases of kidnapping by fraud and 215 cases of kidnapping of a child at the trial phase. In 2023, 40 cases of false arrest; 42 cases of kidnapping by fraud and 49 cases of kidnapping of a child were pending at the level of preliminary inquiry, while 66, 34 and 71 cases respectively for the same offences were pending before trial courts. Violations of the right to liberty and security committed by law enforcement personnel and other individuals were sanctioned by courts.

151- For example, in a judgement of 29 July 2021, the Diamare High Court sentenced **K.B.** to 17 months in prison for false arrest. More repressive, the Benoue High Court found **L.H.W.** guilty and sentenced him to 10 years in prison and to a fine of CFAF 100,000 for kidnapping with fraud and other offences with co-offenders. On 7 January 2022, by Judgment No. 9/22, the Garoua Military Tribunal sentenced **M.B.** to 8 years in prison and a fine of CFAF 1,000,000⁵⁵. **Y.H.** and **A. W.** to 5 years in prison and a fine of CFAF 200,000⁵⁶. On 4 March 2022, by Judgment No. 44/22, **A.N.** and **S.A.** were sentenced to 10 years and 4 years in prison respectively for false arrest and illegal bearing of weapons and defence ammunitions. By Judgment No. 5/CRIM/23 of 9 January 2023, the Garoua Military Tribunal found **M.G.**, a military man, guilty of false arrest and violation of instructions (amoral behaviour likely to tarnish the image of Defence Forces). So, he was sentenced to 3 years in prison. By Judgment No. 106/CRIM of 15 March 2023, the Maroua Military Tribunal found **A.O.** guilty of false arrest as an accessory and sentenced him to 5 years in prison and to pay the sum of CFAF 6,912,200⁵⁷ as damages to the civil party. By Ruling No. 47/CRIM of 7 November 2023, the North Court of Appeal quashed Judgment No. 57/CRIM of 18 May 2022 of the Benoue High Court that acquitted **A.** of kidnapping and trafficking of a child, then sentenced A to 10 years in prison.

152- Other measures included regular controls of places of detention and check of the legality of police custody. Where police custody was illegal, it was terminated. Applications for release from detention were filed before courts. In 2019, applications for release were granted for 1,037 people by trial courts, and 1,115 by Examining Magistrates. During the same year, the courts on their own motion, ordered 2,357 releases i.e, 1,604 without sureties and 1,084 with sureties. In 2023, at the level of preliminary inquiry and trial courts, applications for release were granted for 771 and 260 persons respectively. while 1,397 were released on the court's motion.

§2: Habeas corpus Litigation

⁵⁵About 1,526.71 Euros

⁵⁶ About 305.34Euros.

⁵⁷ About1,552.90 Euros

153- During the reference years, courts granted about 8,083 applications for habeas corpus (immediate release). This ensured the sanctioning of illegal detention at preliminary inquiry phase and trial phase. There were many causes of illegal detention: failure to extend the remand warrant⁵⁸, non-compliance with the time limit for police custody⁵⁹, continued detention after serving sentence⁶⁰, violation of the prohibition of imprisonment in default of payment for people above 60⁶¹ or continued detention of a minor who has been granted bail⁶². Though the habeas corpus procedure is supposed to be expeditious, it was long in some cases.

§3: Commission for the Compensation of Victims of Illegal Detention

154- In 2023, the Commission awarded to Applicant **KAMGANG TCHOMTE Yves André**, a compensation of CFAF 5,067,410⁶³ for illegal detention. Also, in Judgment N.23/CI of 25 September 2024, **SALE ABAI** vs State of Cameroon, the State was ordered to pay the sum of CFAF 40,000,000⁶⁴ to the applicant. By Judgment No.22/CI of 25 September 2024, **ALHADJI MOHAMED DALA** vs State of Cameroon, the State was ordered to pay the sum of CFAF 50,000,000 to the applicant as a compensation for illegal detention. Between 2022 and 2024, the Commission rendered 53 decisions.

Section 5: Right to Fair Trial (Articles 7(1) to 26)

155- The policy to improve court activities, which is supervised by MINJUSTICE, guided measures taken for the implementation of various components of the right to fair trial: right to equal access to courts, right to a competent, independent and impartial court and the rights of the defence. Moreover, amendments were made relating to Bailiffs and Notaries, who participate in the administration of justice on the one hand, and military justice on the other hand.

§1: Guarantee of the Right to Equal Access to Courts

156- As concerns the dissemination of Law materials, numerous legal books, journals and magazines were published⁶⁵. This is the case with *Justitia*, of which about twenty editions were published by MINJUSTICE. In the same vein, laws and regulatory instruments were published in the 2 official languages (English and French), mainly in the *Official Gazette* and the daily Newspaper *Cameroon Tribune* and on the website of the Presidency of the Republic

⁵⁸ Ruling No.41/HC/19 of 20 September 2019 (**BOUBA Jean**).

⁵⁹ Diamare High Court, Ruling No.1/HC/2022 of 25 March 2022

⁶⁰ Mfoundi High Court, Ruling No.197/HC/2022 of 1 December 2022

⁶¹ Diamare High Court, Ruling No. 37/HC of 21 December 2023

⁶² Wouri High Court, Ruling No.51/HC of 28 November 2023.

⁶³ About 7,736.50 Euros

⁶⁴ About 61,068.70 Euros

⁶⁵ For example, the following documents were published in 2023: *Introduction générale au droit camerounais du sport*, *Le droit et les cries au Cameroun* (volumes 1 and 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*, etc.

(www.prc.cm). As at 31 December 2024, there were thousands of documents that can be freely downloaded. These are mainly legislative instruments and regulatory instruments signed by the Head of State. Court decisions were also published, especially in the *Justitia* magazine, where tens of excerpts of decisions rendered by the Special Criminal Court (SCC) were published.

157- With regard to legal aid, commissions set up for this purpose in some courts granted some applications made by people lacking sufficient financial resources, including women, persons with disabilities and indigenous peoples. The average rate of granted applications stood at more than 55%, and reached 66.21% in 2023. In 2023, 9% of beneficiaries were women and 19% of other beneficiaries included detainees, refugees, internally displaced persons, indigenous peoples and persons with disabilities.

158- Studies carried out by the Studies and Planning Division of MINJUSTICE enabled the identification of 34 sites where new prisons can eventually be built in the North West, South, South West, Centre, Littoral and West Regions. Moreover, 2 Complexes for Judicial Services were under construction: 1 in Yaounde and 1 in Douala. Through the installation of lifts and a wheelchair ramp at the ground floor, these complexes take into account accessibility by persons with disabilities. Also, courthouses were under construction in Foubot, Ambam, Bali, Edea, Ngambe and Tombel.

§2: Right to a Competent, Impartial and Independent Court

159- Breach of the rules of jurisdiction were sanctioned by lower courts, Courts of Appeal and the Supreme Court. The following examples can be mentioned: Ruling No. 551/COR of 23 June 2023 of the Centre Court of Appeal that quashed a judgment rendered by a court that wrongly declined *ratione loci* jurisdiction (Case The People and **C.L.L.N** vs **B.B.S.**) and judgments No. 145/COR and 186/COR of 23 September and 25 November 2021 in the case The People and **K.M.** vs **D.J.R.**, The People and N.D. Vs F.D.D.C. by which the Bafoussam Court of First Instance, declined *ratione materiae* jurisdiction to try indecency to child under 16, a felony, since the CFI has jurisdiction only over misdemeanours.

160- With regard to impartiality, no action for damages against a magistrate was registered. From 2019 to 2023, 108 applications for recusals on grounds of partiality were received by Presidents of Courts of Appeal. In 2022, Presidents of Courts of Appeal granted 2 of such applications. Some decisions can be mentioned in this regard. An application for transfer of a case for trial from one court to another was filed before the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court on ground of suspicion. He ordered the transfer of the case to the Panel of Joint Benches of the Supreme Court and ordered the President of the Court of Appeal concerned and the Magistrates in charge of the file to stay the hearing of the matter (Ruling No. 479 of 30 August 2022) By Ruling No. 1/HB/PCA/LIT/19 of 6 August 2019, the Littoral Court of Appeal quashed a ruling rendered by a Judge who had relied on facts not raised during the hearing and of which he had become aware out of the courtroom.

161- Improper composition of courts was also sanctioned ⁶⁶. To ensure proper composition of courts sitting in juvenile delinquency matters, MINJUSTICE and the Ministry of Social Affairs, by Order No. 423/MINJUSTICE and No. 2/MINAS of 19 September 2023, appointed Assessors for the 2023 and 2024 years.

162- With regard to the requirement of the independence of the court, emphasis was laid on the monitoring of the professional obligations of judicial personnel, especially by the Inspectorate General of Judicial Services (IGJS), on building the technical capacity and increasing staff strength and on the allocation of financial resources to the Justice sector. As the IGSJ is meticulous concerning the integrity of judicial personnel, the speedy processing of cases and detention measures, it carried out several document-based controls and visits on the field, including 8 visits of courts in 2023. The IGSJ also monitored the professional obligations of judicial personnel as shown in the table below:

Table 1: Monitoring of the Professional Obligations of Judicial Personnel from 2020 to 2024.

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Complaints received and reviewed	185	212	218	259	
Investigations ordered	52	46	129	73	
Letters of observation addressed	1	35	27	32	
Queries addressed	1	28	51	13	
Observation requests addressed	30	69	132	82	
Files forwarded to the disciplinary Body	1	7	16	20	

Source: MINJUSTICE/IGSJ

163- From 2020 to 2023, more than 1,500 judicial personnel underwent continuous training and from 2021 to 2023, the capacities of about 500 personnel were built in Human Rights. To illustrate, in 2023, 211 Judicial and Legal Officers were trained by MINJUSTICE during 19

⁶⁶So, the Littoral Court of Appeal cancelled the abnormal composition of trial courts sitting in labour matters as the Judges rendered their decision in the absence of Assessors, thus violating the provisions of the Labour Code concerning the summon of Assessors. (Ruling No. 142/SOC of 5 April 2019, Re company I. P. vs E.E.A.L.; Ruling No.406/SOC of 2 August 2019, Re company A. Sarl vs T.M.H.). Similarly, the North Court of Appeal quashed judgments rendered by a court that sat in labour matters with 1 out of the 2 Assessors required (Ruling No. 5/SOC of 3 July 2023 in the matter company N.T. Vs D.N. Ruling No. 04/SOC of 8 August 2023 in the case company N.T. vs E.Z.A.E.M. The East Court of Appeal also quashed a judgment rendered in customary law matters by a court made up of Assessors that were not representing the culture of the parties (Ruling No. 12/DL of 26 October 2023 in the case A.M.C. vs K.M.D.

workshops on domestic violence, penal justice, the protection of children in the penal justice system, the protection of child victims and witnesses, the protection of juvenile offenders in times of crisis, and Human Rights in relation to HIV and tuberculosis.

164- Following the absorption (by Decrees No. 2020/427, 2020/428, 2020/429 and 2020/430 of 10 August 2020) of Pupil Magistrates in the Corps of Judicial and Legal Services after sessions of the Higher Judicial Council, the number of Magistrates rose from 1,646 in 2019 to 1 783 in 2024 including 592 women. These numbers will increase, as the absorption of some batches of Pupil Magistrates is pending. The number of non-Judicial and Legal Officers (civil servants and non-civil servants) also increased. It rose from 1202 in 2019 to 5 172 including 2 902 women in 2024.

165- Compared to 2019, the budget allocated in 2024 to the Constitutional Council (CFAF 3,944,000,000⁶⁷), the Supreme Court (CFAF 5,427,000,000⁶⁸) and MINJUSTICE (CFAF 69,308 000,000 ⁶⁹) increased respectively by 70.33%, 17% and 4.3%.

§3: Guarantee of the Rights of the Defence

166- As concerns the general situation, and with regard to assistance by a Counsel, a new President of the Cameroon Bar Association was elected for a 2 year-term renewable.

167- At the operational level, litigants were assisted by Counsel, the number of which increased after the absorption of Advocates from foreign Bars and the organisation of the end-of -training examination in March 2020, the results of which were published through Order No. 190/DPJ/SG/MJ of 29 April 2020 by MINJUSTICE to publish the list of the 872 successful candidates. After the entrance examination for pupillage held in April 2024, 2,016 were declared successful by Order No. 207/DPJ/SG/MJ of 21 June 2024 by MINJUSTICE. The number of Advocates rose from 2,648 (including 585 women) in 2019 to 3,759 including 1,084 women as at 31 December 2024.

168- Advocates were trained in several fields. To illustrate, between 2022 and 2023, 235 Advocates attended training sessions on Human Rights organised by MINJUSTICE with its own funds or with the support of partners. The Department of Judicial Professions of MINJUSTICE registered 255 complaints against Advocates for alleged aggravated misappropriation, rental fraud, unjust retention of another person's property, forgery or use of forged documents and false pretence. These complaints were forwarded to Legal Departments having jurisdiction and to the Bar Association for investigations.

169- Hearing cases within a reasonable time remained a concern for MINJUSTICE and courts, which rejected dilatory requests⁷⁰. In this vein, by Circular-letters of 30 June and 22 September

⁶⁷ About 6,021,374.04 Euros.

⁶⁸ About 8,285,5496.18 Euros.

⁶⁹ About 105,813,540.46 Euros.

⁷⁰So, in the case *The People and the State of Cameroon vs E.E.J.F and M.N.J.A.* subject of Ruling No. 23/CRIM/TCS of 11 November 2020, seized with dilatory requests for counter-expertise and visit to the *locus in quo*, the Special Criminal Court stated that *the requests presented are clearly devoid of any relevant justification and must be rejected*. In the case of *F.S vs. D.B.C, the Mungo HC*, through Judgment No. 23/CIV of 13 August 2021, rejected an application to stay proceedings which it considered as vexatious. In the matter between *K.R. and*

2022 addressed to the Procureurs General at the Courts of Appeal, the Minister of State, Minister of Justice, Keeper of the Seals reiterated the need for the speedy hearing of cases. This issue was discussed during the Meetings of Heads of Courts of Appeal and Regional Delegates of Penitentiary Administration in 2019, 2020 and 2024⁷¹. After the meetings of 2019 and 2020, these authorities instructed their collaborators in the regions to comply with this key recommendation, that is, the speedy processing of cases.

170- Public hearings remained the principle and as hearings in camera are the exception required to protect private life, public order, the security of the State and minors. From 2021 to 2023, lower courts and Courts of Appeal heard in camera 1,089 cases concerning minors who are victims or in conflict with the law.

171- Courts used the services of Translators and Interpreters posted by the State. Their number rose from 35 in 2019 to 41 in 2024. As mentioned in the response to the recommendations, the services of *ad hoc* Interpreters were requested for interpretation into local languages and in courts where there are no professional interpreters.

§ 4: Developments concerning Bailiffs, Notaries and Military Justice

172- The number of Notaries' offices (104 including 56 headed by women) and Bailiffs' offices (493 including 107 headed by women) remained unchanged. As concerns vacancies, liquidators or interim Notaries or Bailiffs were appointed or in the process of been appointed. The number of First Clerks increased (they were 18 before 2019) after Order No. 399/DPJ/SG/MINJUSTICE of 17 August 2023 to publish the list of the 25 candidates for the professional examination of First Clerks was made public.

173- Decree No. 79/448 of 5 November 1979 to lay down the rules and regulations and the organisation of the profession of Bailiff and Process-Server was repealed by Decree No. 2023/42 of 25 January 2023. Among the innovations, this Decree provides that Bailiffs shall be law officials; the profession of Bailiff shall be open to people aged 23, rather than 25 before; the retirement age rose from 60 to 65; duly established incapacity was added as a reason for cessation of duty. The Decree also provides that the profession of Bailiff can be exercised through the formation of professional partnerships; it provides that Bailiffs' offices are inviolable and unseizable.

174- In a bid to strengthen discipline as regards military justice, the Head of State signed Decree No. 2024/555 of 14 November 2024 to lay down the rules applicable to the recruitment and

S.A.A, where by Judgment No. 4/SO/PI of 5 April 2022, the Court of First Instance of Maroua, in a labour matter, rejected as unfounded, an application for stay of proceedings based on pending criminal proceedings whereas, no proof of such was shown.. Similarly, by Judgment No. 5/2022/TA/GRA of 14 September 2022, the Administrative Court of Garoua, in the matter between T. and State of Cameroon, rejected as inappropriate, an application for cadastral survey that was not likely to shed light on the matter. In the same vein, by Judgment No. 2/SO/2022 of 20 January 2022, in the matter between N. and the NGO C.N.C, the High Court of Diamare rejected as unfounded, an objection of pending proceedings, whereas the matters concerned had distinct subjects.

⁷¹The following themes were discussed in 2019, 2020 and 2024 respectively: “*the role of judicial and penitentiary personnel in the fight against judicial delays*”, “*implementation of recommendations relating to the involvement of all stakeholders in the fight against judicial delays*” and “*remand in custody*”.

discipline of military justice personnel. This Decree which is applicable to Military Magistrates, Assessors, Military Court Registrars and Penitentiary Administration Personnel provides for a disciplinary system, disciplinary bodies, disciplinary faults and sanctions. The Head of State also signed Decree No. 2024/554 of 14 November 2024 to lay down the administrative organisation of Military Tribunals. This Decree which repeals Decree No. 85/520 of 13 April 1985 on the same subject matter, provides rules for the organisation and functioning of the Legal Department which is organised in offices and of the Bench which comprises offices of the Examining Magistrates and the Registry.

Section 6: Principle of Lawfulness of Offences and Penalties (Article 7-2)

175- As provided for by the Constitution of Cameroon⁷² and the Penal Code⁷³, the principle remained that no penalty or measure may be imposed unless provided by law, and except in respect of an offence lawfully defined. Normative reforms, especially as concerns special criminal law, did not violate this principle.

176- With regard to general criminal law, Law No. 2019/20 of 24 December 2019 was signed to amend and supplement certain provisions of Law No. 2016/7 relating to the Penal Code. It provides for the new offence of contempt of tribe or ethnic group.

177- As concerns special criminal law, several instruments signed provided for new offences. This is the case with Law No. 2022/17 of 27 December 2022 on the suppression of piracy, terrorism and offences against the safety of maritime navigation and platforms.

Section 7: Freedom of Conscience and Religion (Article 8)

178- During the period under review, no new religion was authorised. The State continued to guarantee the enjoyment of the freedom of religion and the smooth functioning of religious denominations in compliance with their rules and the regulation in force. So, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon that was supposed to hold from 9 to 14 January was disrupted on 12 January 2024 due to some conflicts opposing 2 factions of that church. As part of the good offices procedure, the Prime Minister, Head of Government instructed that deliberations be continued under control.

⁷² The Law shall not have a retrospective effect. No person may be judged and punished, except by virtue of a law enacted and published before the offence committed;

⁷³ Art.5.- No one shall be punished for a felony or a misdemeanour not provided for by the law or for a simple offence not provided for by the law.

No one shall be punished by a penalty not provided for in the law where the offence is a felony or a misdemeanour, or by the law or regulations where the offence is a simple offence.

Art.6.- Only facts constituting an offence at the date when they were committed shall be punishable. Only legally applicable sanctions at the same date shall be passed.

However, new provisions shall apply to offences committed before their entry into force and that did not give rise to a res judicata conviction when they are less severe than the previous provisions.

Section 8: Freedom of Expression and Communication (Article 9)

179- The implementation of the liberalization of the media sector resulted in the increase of sources of information, the strengthening of the fight against cybercrime and the judicial guarantee of the enjoyment of the freedom of expression and communication.

§1: Increased Sources of Information

180- The number of media organs increased. In fact, in 2019, there were 32 television stations and 200 radio stations. In 2023, the number rose to 54 television stations, 250 radio stations including 166 with an authorisation, 644 written press outlets, 58 community radios, 500 teledistribution companies and 52 online press organs. As at 31 December 2024, 93 television stations, 129 commercial radio stations, 169 community radio stations, 232 written press outlets, 72 online media and 65 teledistribution companies were operating with a license. There was thus diversification of the media landscape and freedom relating to editorial line. Several organs operated without a license from the Ministry of Communication...

181- Moreover, public assistance to private communication was restructured by Order No. 31/MINCOM/CAB of 13 April 2020 to reorganise the modalities of access to public assistance for private communication. This Order enabled media enterprises eligible for assistance on the basis of more clearly stated criteria. Firstly, the name of the support changed to Institutional Support by the State to private press. The Order provides that only print media and cybernetic companies can receive assistance. Audiovisual press companies (that were eligible to funding by the audiovisual special Fund instituted by Law No. 2015/7 of 20 April 2015 governing audiovisual activities, printing companies and global communication agencies are now excluded by the new Order. This has a significant impact on the amount to be shared.

182- The calculation method takes into account the global amount to be distributed to beneficiaries and applications for assistance. The national commission in charge of examining the said applications allocates marks and the distribution is done with transparency. This national Commission that works at the central level is made up of representatives of public administrations and organizations, representatives of professionals publishing in English and in French. The poor constitution of files is one of the main reasons for rejection of applications. The commission in its new configuration held its first session in June 2020 to distribute CFAF 240,000,000⁷⁴ among the beneficiaries. The amount of the support was reduced due to budget constraints relating to Covid-19. From CFAF 66,000,000⁷⁵ in 2022, public assistance rose to CFAF 119,000,000⁷⁶ in 2023, to be shared among 53 print media organs and 5 online media organs.

183- In order to guarantee better access by people in Central Africa to electronic communication services, the Heads of State of the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC) took the commitment to lay down a legal framework for the suppression of community wide-roaming taxes and cost overburden to create an ICT market in the sub-region

⁷⁴ About 366,412.21Euros.

⁷⁵ About 100,763.36Euros

⁷⁶ About 181,679.39Euros

during the CEMAC Heads of State Conference, which in February 2017, approved the Regional Economic Programme (REP), one of the projects of which relates to the drafting of a regional telecommunications policy and the development of GSM roaming in CEMAC member States.

184- In this vein, the Ministers in charge of Telecommunications in CEMAC member States met in a Council of Ministers on 8 September 2020 and adopted Regulation No. 04/20-UEAC-CM-35 relating to roaming on mobile electronic communications networks open to the public in the CEMAC zone. The goal of this Regulation is to provide harmonised regulations in the CEMAC zone and ultimately have a single telephone network in the CEMAC zone. For project to be achieved, memorandums of understanding were signed between CEMAC member States and a Technical National Committee (TNC) was set up in each country. The said Committee is made up of operators and headed by the supervisory authority in charge of telecommunications. As provided for in CEMAC Regulation No. 04/20-UEAC-CM-35, the duty of TNCs is make free roaming effective.

185- So, on 4 May 2022 in Yaounde, Cameroon and the Central African Republic signed a Memorandum of Understanding relating to the interconnection of communication networks between the two countries. This Memorandum lays down modalities prior to digital interconnection, in line with the will to reduce the digital divide and increase the connectivity while reducing the cost of services. Since 2020, some developments were made concerning the implementation of the free roaming project, especially as regards voice, data and SMS between the operators and supervisory authorities of the sub-region. However, despite these significant steps, some surmountable difficulties occurred in the implementation of the free roaming project in Central Africa.

186- With regard to optical fibre installation: optical fibre cables were connected and put into operation in some industrial and university towns as well as border towns of Cameroon; ICT and telecommunication equipment was installed in some towns. *Transmission Control Protocol*⁷⁷ and *Personal Area Network*⁷⁸; the urban optical loop of Buea was constructed; and automatic equipment for the collection, transmission of meteorological data was acquired, installed and interconnected. Also, the optical fibre was provided in the Kribi industry and port area and transborder or remote areas. The network extension continued, as on 30 October 2023, an agreement was signed between the State of Cameroon and Cameroon Telecommunications (CAMTEL) for the retrocession to this public company of 812km of optical fibre, which were added to the 12,000km already owned by the said operator and concern the overhead cables laid by Eneo on the Southern interconnected grid, especially the Yaounde-Boumnyebel-Edea-Kribi-Douala-Limbe-Nkongssamba-Bafoussam segment. This agreement shall lead to the expansion of the broadband network and ease internet access in remote areas.

187- In fact, the implementation of the Project for the Acceleration of Digital Transformation of Cameroon (PATNUC)⁷⁹, a study on the amendment of the legal and institutional framework

⁷⁷ Set of standardised rules enabling computers to communicate on a network such as the Internet.

⁷⁸ Local network that interconnect the tools of a same workstation

⁷⁹ Within the framework of the Cameroon-World Bank cooperation, the Government of Cameroon obtained a project preparation advance (PPA) from the International Development Association (IDA) for the preparation of the Project for the Acceleration of Digital Transformation of Cameroon (PATNUC). PATNUC is a project to

of the telecommunications and ICT sector was ongoing in order for it to match the convergence of technologies and the development of digital economy. A bill relating to the right of access and use of information (public) and the digital transformation of the Public Service is being drafted.

§2: Strengthening the Fight against Cybercrime

188- The normative framework for the fight against cyber delinquency was strengthened through the accession by Cameroon to the Budapest Convention on cybercrime (adopted in Budapest on 23 November 2001) by Decree No. 2022/169 of 23 May 2022. These instruments came in to enhance existing domestic legislation on cybercrime and lay down the international cooperation modalities relating thereto. The ratification of this instrument strengthens the existing legal framework governed by Law No. 2010/12 of 21 December 2010 on cybersecurity and cybercriminality in Cameroon. Also, in 2023, Cameroon adopted Law No. 2023/9 of 25 July 2023 to institute the charter of child online protection in Cameroon and Law No. 2024/17 of 23 December 2024 relating to personal data protection in Cameroon. These Laws improved the framework protecting users, including children, against cybercrime-related threats.

§3: Controlling Freedom of Expression

189- Control was done through regulation by the National Communication Council (NCC) and the Telecommunications Regulatory Board (ART) and by judicial guarantee of this freedom.

A: Regulation by the National Communication Council

190- NCC provided continuous training for media professionals and ensured respect for ethics.

§1: Continuous Training for Media Professionals

191- Several training sessions were organised for media professionals. On 26 June 2023, a national seminar on hate speech was organised on the theme “*Mechanisms to eradicate hate speech in Cameroon media*”; an international forum was held on 8 and 9 November 2023 in Yaounde on the theme *Social media regulation: modalities for collaboration between African media regulatory bodies and digital platforms*.

NCC also published general communiques with an educational purpose on the responsibility of moderators of debate and interactive programmes for the comments of panelists.

§2: Implementing Respect for Ethics and Deontology

increase the use of digital services to foster employment and entrepreneurship in Cameroon. The project covers the entire national territory. It aims at pursuing reforms and policies in the communication and information technologies (ICT) sector, improving the digital skills of citizens, promoting the development of digital applications and services and increasing the scope and use of digital services to foster employment and entrepreneurship in Cameroon. The programme is divided into three main components:

Component No. 1: Digital Strategy, public policy and regulation for digital inclusion and transformation;

Component No. 2: digital connectivity and inclusion;

Component No. 3: easing the implementation of solutions based on data in the agricultural sector.

192- Within this framework, the awareness of media professionals was raised and their capacities were built.

193- Capacity-building seminars for media professionals included: the discussion workshop organised for 38 Heads of Communication Units of Administrations that was held on 18 and 19 July 2019 in MINCOM on the theme: Boosting Communication.

194- Moreover, 400 media professionals from Cameroon and abroad attended the deliberations of the 48th Meeting of the Francophone Press Union held from 18 to 22 November 2019 in Yaounde on the theme: “Emotion journalism, information journalism”? It was notably recommended to increase respect for journalism deontology. On 26 June 2023, in Yaounde NCC organised a national seminar on hate speech on the theme: “*Mechanisms to eradicate hate speech in Cameroon media*”;

195- Awareness-raising activities organised include: for the year 2022, from 23 to 26 July 2022 in Garoua and Maroua, , the media awareness-raising mission on the necessity to respect professional ethics and deontology; from 1 to 5 August 2022, continuation of the awareness-raising mission of NCC among media professionals in Ngaoundere on the necessity to respect professional ethics, from 31 August to 5 September 2022 in the towns of Yaounde, Douala and Bafoussam, organisation of the first edition of the educational workshop termed “*les cafés du CNC*” on the theme: *The responsibility of presenters in the conduct of audiovisual debates*. “*Les Cafés du NCC*” is an initiative meant for capacity-building of media professionals through practical analysis of the current practice of the profession. The following events were also organised: awareness-raising among media professionals in Bamenda from 14 to 17 November 2022 on the theme: *communication in crisis period, information processing and conduct of audiovisual debates*, the second edition of the workshop termed “*Les cafés du CNC*” in Ebolowa on 23 November 2022 on the theme: *Journalistic investigation: pitfalls to be avoided* and in Buea on 30 November 2022 on the theme: *Reporting in times of crisis and instrumentalisation of journalists*.

196- Apart from awareness-raising, NCC also held stakeholders accountable by imposing sanctions which enabled the cleaning up of the media sector. . In 2020, within the framework of regulation of the content of information disseminated, NCC received 43 complaints including 15 by individuals, 15 by public authorities, 7 by associations and seized itself of 6 complaints. Five decisions were taken against print media outlets (*La Météo, Le Soir* and *Mutations*) and audiovisual media (*Vision 4* and *Royal FM*) for publication of offending comments compromising the dignity, dissemination of unfounded and offending accusations, breach of professional duties due to failure to cross-check and properly process information published and unfounded declarations. In 2021, NCC received 22 complaints including 8 by individuals, 5 by public authorities, 5 by institutions and 4 by NCC as of right, and rendered 21 decisions. Such decisions included 15 temporary suspensions for less than 6 months, 1 temporary suspension for 6 months, 2 warnings and 3 case dismissals. In 2022, 35 complaints were registered, including 24 by individuals, 9 by public authorities, 1 by a group of institutions, 1 by an association of professionals.

197- Following allegations of breach of ethics and professional deontology in social communication, NCC took 26 decisions against contraveners of the Code of Ethics of Journalists, including 20 temporary suspensions for less than 6 months, 2 warnings and 4 case dismissals. To illustrate, on 1 April 2022, the publication director of *Equinoxe Télévision* was suspended for one month for unfounded, insinuating, offending comments and misrepresentation of facts, while his collaborator was sanctioned similarly for failure to control a panelist.

198- In 2023, NCC took 20 decisions against press organs, including 16 temporary suspensions of less than 6 months, 1 warning, 1 definitive ban and 2 case dismissals. The said sanctions were imposed following allegations of non-compliance with rules of ethics and deontology in social communication. On 22 September 2023, NCC also ordered the removal of television channel *Canal+Elles* from the package of the teledistributor *Canal Plus Horizons* for persisting broadcasting of pornographic and homosexual programmes.

199- NCC also published general communiques with an educational purpose on the responsibility of moderators of debates and interactive programmes in relation with the comments of panelists.

B: Actions of the Telecommunications Regulatory Board

200- Measures were taken to improve service quality and protect consumers.

1: Actions to Improve Services

201- The degradation of the quality of service in the telecommunications and information and communication technologies (ICT) sector in Cameroon over the last years led consumers of digital communication services to express their exasperation by launching an operation termed: “Flight mode”⁸⁰ in order to rebel against the many abuses they suffered on a daily basis from operators in the telecommunications and ICTs sector. The most recurrent complaints by users of electronic communications include the poor supply of internet, difficulties in making calls (interconnection issues, lag time, number of attempts, etc.), misleading advertisement, unsolicited SMS, expensive communication services and lack of transparency in setting charges to be paid by subscribers.

202- The magnitude of this situation led the Ministry in charge of Telecommunications (MINPOSTEL) to urgently summon on Thursday 27 April 2023⁸¹, ART and three over the four

⁸⁰ The “flight mode” operation, the initiator of which is still unknown was launched for the first time on 24 April 2023 and aimed at a general boycott of the services of *Orange Cameroun* and *MTN Cameroon* for two (2) hours (12 noon to 2 p.m) in case they did not lower the costs of their services. Similar operations were launched in Burkina Faso and Côte d’Ivoire for the same reasons.

⁸¹ During this meeting, each operator had to present the steps taken so far to improve on the quality of service in its network (coverage, pricing and investment), in compliance with its terms of reference. The Telecommunications Regulatory Board was also asked to present initiatives taken in order to make operators comply with their terms of reference, especially improvement of the quality of services.

communication operators: CAMTEL⁸², MTN Cameroon⁸³ and Orange Cameroun⁸⁴, for a sector meeting on : Improving the quality of services in Cameroon and protecting subscribers. In 2022, MINPOSTEL organised a workshop with the above-mentioned stakeholders on the theme: *Stakes and challenges of the quality of electronic communications services in Cameroon*. The workshop organised at the initiative of the Association of licensed mobile telephone operators in Cameroon⁸⁵, held at the Hilton Hotel in Yaounde on Thursday 27 April 2023⁸⁶. During the workshop, the service quality and network coverage of electronic communications were assessed; difficulties encountered were identified and sustainable and effective solutions on the short, medium and long term were suggested. During these workshops each operator made a commitment to improve on the quality of service of electronic communications in Cameroon. In this vein, several strong recommendations and a plan of action were adopted.

203- To make sure that operators meet obligations relating to the quality of services as stipulated in their terms of reference, ART carried out several controls in 2022 and 2023. At the end of these controls, several reminders to comply with the regulations in force were notified to the above-mentioned operators. After some reminders, some pecuniary sanctions⁸⁷ were imposed and notified to CAMTEL, MTN Cameroon, ORANGE Cameroun and VIETTEL Cameroun. They amounted to CFAF 6,000,000,000⁸⁸ distributed as follows: CAMTEL: CFAF 800,000,000⁸⁹, MTN Cameroon: CFAF 1,400,000,000⁹⁰, ORANGE Cameroon: CFAF 2,200,000,000⁹¹ and VIETTEL Cameroun: CFAF 1 600 000 000⁹².

2: Protecting Consumers

204- As part of its duty to protect users, ART (Head Office and regional delegations of Douala, Yaounde, Bamenda (ART to be verified) and Garoua received complaints from subscribers of

⁸² CAMTEL signed a public service concession with the State for the establishment and use of a fix network of electronic communications; the establishment and use of a mobile electronic communication network related to 2G, 3G and 4G access technologies and the establishment and use of an electronic communications transportation network with national coverage, including marine cables landing station and teleports to one or more satellite networks.

⁸³ MTN Cameroon signed a concession with the State for the establishment and use of a mobile electronic communications network related to 2G, 3G and 4G access technologies.

⁸⁴ Orange Cameroun signed a concession with the State for the establishment and use of a mobile electronic communications network related to 2G, 3G and 4G access technologies.

⁸⁵ Cameroon Telecommunications, MTN Cameroon, Orange Cameroun and Viettel Cameroun.

⁸⁶ During this meeting, each operator had to present the steps taken so far to improve on the quality of service in its network (coverage, pricing and investment), in compliance with its terms of reference. The Telecommunications Regulatory Board was also asked to present initiatives taken in order to make operators comply with their terms of reference, especially improvement of the quality of services.

⁸⁷ These sanctions were imposed after performance controls of networks of the 4 above-mentioned operators which were carried out during the 2nd semester 2022. After the controls, 14 warnings were notified to the operators and a time limit was given for the implementation of corrective measures, especially as concerns works meant to optimize the performances of their 2G/3G and 4G mobile telephone networks.

⁸⁸ See Communiqué of 25 May 2023 by ART concerning pecuniary sanctions imposed on mobile telephone operators in Cameroon.

⁸⁹ About 1,221,394.04 Euros.

⁹⁰ About 2,137,404.58 Euros.

⁹¹ About 3,358,778.62 Euros.

⁹² About 2,242,478.09 Euros.

telecommunications services⁹³. To illustrate, in 2022, 49 written complaints and 54 oral complaints were registered against Orange Cameroun, MTN *Cameroon*, VIETTEL Cameroun and CAMTEL. In 2023, ART received 113 written complaints and 54 oral complaints against Orange Cameroun, MTN *Cameroon*, VIETTEL Cameroun and CAMTEL. ART notified 21 warnings to these operators and to 2 others (*Radio Balafon* and *Success Radio*) for using electric radio frequencies without authorisation and for not respecting the rates announced or published.

C: Judicial Guarantee of Freedom of Expression and Communication

205- Investigations were opened following some attacks relating to freedom of expression or communication.

206- Some investigations were in relation to journalists or people who introduced themselves as journalists. This is the case with **Arsène Salomon MBANI ZOGO** aka **Martinez ZOGO**, Director of the radio station *Amplitude FM*, who was kidnapped on 17 January 2023. His dead body was found on 22 January 2023 in Ebogo II, a suburb of Yaounde. Investigations led to the arrest of some suspects. A preliminary inquiry was opened by the Examining Magistrate of the Yaounde Military Tribunal, and they were charged (for violation of instructions, false arrest and torture (co-offenders), accessory in torture, conspiracy to commit torture and false arrest, usurpation of title, usurpation of office and accessory to capital murder) and remanded in custody and committed for trial before the Yaounde Military Tribunal. The matter was pending before the said tribunal.

207- Moreover, on 2 February 2023 in Yaounde, the radio presenter **Jean-Jacques OLA BEBE** was found dead. In Bamenda, on 7 May 2023, **ANYE NDE NSOH**, Journalist at the Advocate News Paper was shot dead by an armed group. Investigations in the two cases were ongoing.

208- The opening of these investigations translates the will of the State to ensure, within the realisation of freedom of expression and communication, the protection of all citizens and not of specific categories, including Human Rights Defenders and whistle blowers.

209- Moreover, the interests of parties were protected against violations perpetrated by media professionals through decisions rendered by courts. The case between Honourable **Faustine FOTSO** and Journalist **Christophe BOBIOKONO**, publication director of the weekly magazine *Kalara* is an example. **Christophe BOBIOKONO** and his collaborator **Irène MBEZELE** were sentenced to a suspended 2 years in prison for defamation and contempt of public bodies. Pecuniary awards were also imposed on them. Mention can also be made of the case *The People and NJOCK Louis Richard vs Adalbert HIOL*. The latter, who is a journalist, was prosecuted for propagation of false news and defamation through the press. On 27 December 2019, the Douala-Bonanjo CFI declared him guilty of all the charges brought against him and sentenced him to 18 months in prison and to pay a fine of CFAF 2,000,000⁹⁴

⁹³ In 2021, ART received 75 written complaints and 13 oral complaints against *Orange Cameroun*, *MTN Cameroon* (MTNC), *VIETTEL Cameroun* and CAMTEL. The complaints concerned unjustified bundles debit, poor quality of service, defective terminals, unilateral amendment of contracts relating to payment of bills etc. While some cases were settled by the parties prior to any conciliation before the regulatory authority, others required its intervention to be resolved. In all, 5 complaints led to the initiation of a conciliation procedure

⁹⁴ About 3,053.43 Euros.

and damages amounting to CFAF 10,560,000⁹⁵. The court also ordered the 6 month-suspension of the social communication organ in which the offences were committed. Besides, on 5 January 2022, by Judgment No. 6/COR, the Maroua CFI found **H.H.** guilty of defamation and propagation of false information by use of electronic means to the detriment of **A.A.H.** And sentenced him to pay a fine of CFAF 3,000,000 CFA⁹⁶ and to pay the sum of CFAF 5,000,000⁹⁷ as damages.

210- The courts protected the dignity of users from malicious use of new ICTs, especially social media. Thus, in the matter **The People and M.B. vs M.H.M.F. and E.W.O.**, by Judgment No. 553/FD/COR of 3 March 2022, the Court of First Instance of Douala-Bonanjo found the defendants guilty of obscene publications and violation of privacy by electronic means (E.W.O.) and for obscene publications and accessory to the violation of privacy s (M.H.M.F.). The court sentenced **E.W.O.** to 9 months in prison and a fine of CFAF 1,000,000⁹⁸; **M.H.M.F.** to 4 months in prison and CFAF 500,000⁹⁹. They were sentenced to pay to **M.B.**, the victim as damages to the tune of CFAF 20,300,000¹⁰⁰. An appeal was filed against this judgment.

211- On 25 August 2022, by Judgment No. 578/COR, the CFI of Mbalmayo found **A.M.E.C.** guilty of defamation and propagation of false information by use of electronic means and sentenced him to 4 months in prison and a fine of CFAF 1,000,000 The Court granted the victim **Z.M.O.D.**, a symbolic franc in compensation for the harm suffered.

212- On 10 April 2023, the CFI Douala-Bonanjo, by Judgment n°526/COR, found **N.B.Y.** guilty of theft by electronic means and sentenced him to 2 months in prison and to pay the sum of CFAF 1,300,000 FCFA¹⁰¹ to *Société Générale Cameroun S.A.*, the civil party, for the damage suffered. Similarly, the CFI Garoua, by Judgment No. 119/COR of 29 September 2023 found **F.F** and **A.P.L.P** guilty of false pretence, blackmail and invasion of privacy by electronic means and sentenced them to 3 years in prison and to pay a fine of CFAF 1,000,000 and to pay the sum of CFAF 3,600,000¹⁰²as damages to the victim **M.H.B.** The same court, by Judgment No. 1492/COR of 31 October 2023, found **O.I.** Guilty of false pretence though electronic means against MTN Cameroon and sentenced him to 3 years in prison and ordered him to pay the sum of CFAF 1 700 000¹⁰³as damages to the victim.

Section 9: Freedom of Association and Freedom of Assembly (Articles 10 and 11)

213- Freedom of association will be addressed first, then freedom of assembly.

§1: Freedom of Association

214- Subject to compliance with legal provisions, the right to form or join a group, to set up, to be or not to be a member of an association is guaranteed. This is provided in Section 1 of Law

⁹⁵ About 16,122.13 Euros.

⁹⁶ About 4,580.15 Euros.

⁹⁷ About 7,633.59 Euros.

⁹⁸ About 1,526.72 Euros.

⁹⁹ About 763.36 Euros

¹⁰⁰ About 30,992.37 Euros

¹⁰¹ About 1,984.73 Euros

¹⁰² About 5,496.18 Euros

¹⁰³ About 2,593.42 Euros

No. 90/53 of 19 December 1990 relating to freedom of association. To ascertain that protection, through Law No. 2021/22 of 16 December 2021, law makers provided a new system for political parties, trade unions, sports associations, non-governmental organizations, artistic and cultural associations, as well as inter-branch organizations. In fact, pursuant to Section 5(4) New of this Law, these entities shall be governed by separate instruments.

215- As concerns the diversity of associations in Cameroon, as at 31 December 2022, there were 329 political parties, 84 NGOs and in the network of the CHRC, more than 715 CSOs. Moreover, on 9 November 2023, in to enhance political dialogue, the Minister of Territorial Administration gave authorisations to 40 new political parties, thus increasing the total number to 368.

216- In 2024, there were 115 NGOs. On 6 December 2024, the Minister of Territorial Administration signed suspension Orders¹⁰⁴ and Orders declaring some NGOs null and void and banning their activities¹⁰⁵ s. Suspensions were due to failure to understand the financial transactions of these organisations and suspicion of the financing of terrorism. Cancellations and bans were due to lack of authorisations.

§2: Freedom of Assembly

217- The organisation of some marches gave rise to proceedings. In fact, on 26 January 2019, the President of the Cameroon Renaissance Movement, **Maurice KAMTO** organised a peaceful march that was supervised by forces of law and order, considering the risks of disturbances. On 22 September 2020, despite a prohibition by administrative authorities, the militants of this party took to the streets. Many of them were arrested and brought before courts having jurisdiction. Proceedings on the merits were ongoing before the Supreme Court of Cameroon. Following a recommendation made during the Major National Dialogue held in Yaounde from 30 October to 4 November 2019, discontinuance orders were made in favour of some of these militants and they were released.

Section 10: Freedom of Movement, Right to choose one's residence, to leave a Country and to seek Asylum

218- Some strides were made in the implementation of Article 12 of the Charter, especially as concerns the freedom of movement and the right to choose one's residence, to leave a country, including one's own country and to come back and the right to seek asylum. No collective expulsion was made and expulsions of foreigners were carried in accordance with the law.

A: Freedom of Movement and to choose one's Residence

219- During the period under review, freedom of movement continued to be ensured between countries of the CEMAC Zone.

220- In order to ease movement of people, civil status and identity documents were increasingly issued (see § 576 and 577). In order to bring the population to identification centres, there were developments regarding the means of production and issuance of the national identity card and

¹⁰⁴ Orders No. 120/A/ MINAT to suspend a non-governmental organisation and No. 121/A/ MINAT to suspend an association.

¹⁰⁵ Orders No.122/A/ MINAT and No. 123/A/ MINAT to cancel an organisation and to prohibit its activities.

passports. On 25 August 2021 in Yaounde, the National Passport Production Centre was commissioned. On 29 September 2023, the Douala Passport Production Centre was inaugurated. On 13 May 2024, the Delegate General for National Security and the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the company named *Augentic GmbH* signed a contract to operationalise a new secure identification system in Cameroon. With this new system, national identity, invalidity, residence, or refugee cards will be issued in 48 hours. This contract provides for the construction of 3 centres in Yaounde, Douala and Garoua and of regional and divisional registration centres with 20 to 25 identification stations. The emigration/immigration police stations in Bertoua, Buea, Ebolowa and Maroua were renovated.

221- As part of operations to restore peace in the North West and the South West Regions where there is a crisis, there was restriction of freedom of movement aimed at maintaining the security of people and property in the face of attacks of non-State armed groups. In the Far North Region, they aimed at counter the logistics of the *Boko Haram* group, the modus operandi of which is to move with personal or taxi motorcycles. To curb insecurity in the town of Douala, motorcycles were forbidden to move in some neighbourhoods. Moreover, freedom of movement of persons prosecuted before courts was restricted through prohibitions on leaving the national territory imposed by competent authorities.

B: Right to leave a Country, including one's own Country and Right to Return

222- One of the cruellest manifestations of the migratory crisis was inhuman treatment inflicted on migrants in some countries. In order to ease the return of Cameroonian migrants concerned by this situation, some projects were implemented by the State and its partners. So, within the framework of the European Union Trust Fund -IOM joint initiative for the protection and reintegration of migrants in Cameroon (2017-2019), an interministerial working group coordinated by the Ministry of External Relations was set up to take charge of the welcome and reintegration of these migrants. With an initial objective to support 850 migrants, the Project enabled the repatriation of 2,124 persons. Some 222 persons, including 78 pregnant women and 182 minors were repatriated through other projects. After being repatriated, 813 persons benefited from a professional reintegration programme set up by the State in collaboration with IOM.

C: Right to seek Asylum

223- Following the security crises in the Central African Republic and atrocities by the *Boko Haram* terrorist group, Cameroon continued to implement its hospitality policy. So, in January 2024, there were 10,857 asylum seekers, as against 9,948 in 2019. In 2019, there were 406,277 refugees in Cameroon as against 478,469 in January 2024, i.e. 1.84% of the population¹⁰⁶. To ensure their access to basic social services, guarantee free movement on the national territory, protect them from judicial proceedings and expulsions for illegal immigration, they received, upon arrival, identification papers from HCR after registration. Several measures towards installation, supply of social basic services, protection and empowerment were taken in favour of asylum seekers, refugees and internally displaced persons.

¹⁰⁶ About 26,000,000 inhabitants.

224- As concerns registration and the status of refugee, a memorandum of understanding on sharing personal data was signed on 7 March 2019 between MINREX and HCR. Also, a ministerial Order to establish the Commission on the eligibility for the status of refugee and the Appeals Commission was signed on 7 August 2019 after designation of the members of the said commissions. The said members took oath on 24 October 2019. Despite difficulties related to the availability of financial resources, the activities of the Technical Secretariat of the Eligibility Commission continued.

225- Moreover, to ease movements, identification and the economic inclusion of refugees, DGSN, with the support of the World Bank, issued 5,000 biometric cards to them in the East Region in 2022. In 2023, 4,308 refugees settled in the East and Littoral Regions were also issued cards. In November 2024, Cameroon received from the African Union, support worth about CFAF 124,000,000¹⁰⁷ to care for refugees living on its territory.

226- During the first quarter of the year 2024, there were about 2,182,910 forcefully displaced persons, including 471,734 registered refugees and 10, 887 asylum seekers.

D: Protection against Collective Expulsions and Compliance with the Law on individual Expulsions

227- Section 8 (1) of Law No. 2005/6 of 27 July 2005 relating to the status of refugees in Cameroon enshrines the principle of non-refoulement of asylum seekers and non-criminalisation of their illegal entry. No expulsion was registered during the reporting period.

Section 11: Right to participate in the Management of Public Affairs (Article 13)

228- Apart from involvement in decision-making and recruitment in the Public Service, Cameroonian citizens participated in the management of public affairs, through their representatives at the national or local level. The preparation for elections contributed to the choice of these representatives.

§ 1: Conduct of Public Affairs at the National Level by Elected Representatives

229- The President of the Republic, who was elected in November 2018 continued his 7-year renewable term. As he conducts public affairs at the highest level, he signed several regulatory instruments and decisions (mentioned in this single Report) that guided several sectors of the Nations' life. They can be found on the website www.prc.cm.

230- After the legislative election of 9 February 2020, which was followed by a partial election on 20 March 2020, 180 Members of Parliament were elected for a 5-year term renewable. The Members of Parliament who are from 8 political parties, are distributed as follows: Cameroon People's Democratic Movement -CPDM (152), National Union for Democracy and Progress-NUDP (7), Cameroonian Party for National Reconciliation -PCRN (5), Social Democratic Front -SDF(5), Cameroon Democratic Union -UDC(4), Cameroon National Salvation Front -FSNC (3), Union of Socialist Movements -UMS(2), Movement for the Defence of the Republic -MDR (2). In all, 61 women were elected as Members of Parliament, as against 31 in 2013. Pursuant to Law No. 2024/11 of 24 July 2024, the term of office of Members of

¹⁰⁷ About 189,312.98 Euros

Parliament which was supposed to end in March 2025 was extended to 30 March 2026 due to some constraints.

231- On 12 March 2023, 70 of the 100 Senators were elected for a 5-year term renewable. All from CPDM, they were 42 men and 28 women, as against 26 in 2018. In accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and the Electoral Code, the President of the Republic, by Decree 2018/242 of 12 April 2018, appointed the 30 remaining Senators including 24 from CPDM, and 6 from opposition parties (MDR, SDF, FSNC, NUDP, National Alliance for Democracy and Progress-ANDP, *Union des Populations du Cameroun*-UPC). Among the appointed Senators, were 5 women.

232- In all, the National Assembly and Senate have held 36 ordinary sessions and 1 extraordinary session in December 2019 during which several laws (mentioned in the general introduction and in several parts of this Combined Report) were adopted. Members of Parliament and Senators controlled Government action through oral questions on various themes including access to water, energy, education, health, etc. The 2 Houses also gathered in congress in June 2020, April and July 2024.

233- In order to enable them continue to improve their output, the financial and infrastructural resources of these 2 Houses were increased. Compared to 2019, the budget allocated in 2024 to the Senate (CFAF 15,191,000,000 ¹⁰⁸ to 16,162,000,000 ¹⁰⁹) and to the National Assembly (CFAF 20,724,000,000 ¹¹⁰ to CFAF 29,622,000,000 ¹¹¹) increased by 6 and 30 % respectively. After the premises of the National Assembly got burnt in June 2017, the new premises made up of 3 buildings for offices, 1 semi-circular room and 1 banquet hall was inaugurated on 30 November 2024. The construction was entirely financed by the Peoples Republic of China.

§ 2: Conduct of Public Affairs by Locally Elected Representatives

234- During the election of 6 December 2020, 900 regional councillors were elected for a 5-year term renewable, that is 90 for each of the 10 regions, as follows: 71 councillors elected by an electoral college made up of representatives elected by municipal councillors from each of the 58 divisions and 20 elected by traditional rulers among themselves. The 700 were distributed as follows: CPDM: 540, NUD: 141, UDC: 17, FSNC: 2. In all, 368 women were elected, that is, 47.57% of councillors. As part of litigation ensuing from that election, the Administrative Bench of the Supreme Court of Cameroon rendered 40 decisions.

235- After the election of 9 February 2020, the number of Mayors elected per political party for the 360 councils of Cameroon was as follows: CPDM (316), NUDP (16), PCRN (7), UDC (6), SDF (4), MDR (3), FNSC (4), Patriotic Movement for a New Cameroon-MPCN(2), UMS(2) and Cameroon National Citizen Movement -MCNC (1). Of the 10,626 municipal councillors, there were 2,658 women i.e. 24.7% of councillors, as against 16% during the last election. As part of litigation ensuing from that election, the Administrative Bench of the Supreme Court of Cameroon rendered 234 decisions. Administrative Courts also rendered some

¹⁰⁸ About 23,192,336.41 Euros.

¹⁰⁹ About 24,674,809.16 Euros.

¹¹⁰ About 31,639,5694.66 Euros.

¹¹¹ About 45,224,427.48 Euros.

decisions. For example, the Administrative Court of Garoua rendered 24 decisions including 4 ordering the rehabilitation of some candidacy lists previously rejected by ELECAM. By Decree No. 2024/328 of 24 July 2024, the term of office of municipal councillors was extended from 25 February 2025 to 31 May 2026.

236- In order to ensure proper deployment of these locally elected representatives, the decentralisation was furthered, with the increase of the budget of the MINDDEVEL and of the general budget relating to decentralisation, as mentioned in the response to the recommendations. Moreover, on the average 30 powers of the 68 that were devolved to councils by Law No. 2019/24 of 24 December to institute the general code of regional and local authorities were supported by the transfer of resources by Ministries during the reference period. As concerns regions, only the 6 powers over 20 that were devolved were allocated resources for the year 2024.

237- From 2019 to 2024, the Special Council Support Fund (FEICOM) made 2,043 grants amounting to CFAF 218,829,614,327 FCFA¹¹² to 356 councils and 44 grants amounting to CFAF 21,041,923,798¹¹³ to 10 Regions for electrification and water supply projects, the construction of a town hall and other development projects.

238- Significant strides were made by the adoption of Law No. 2019/24 of 24 December 2019 to institute the general code of regional and local authorities. This instrument provides for the general legal framework of decentralization, the status of locally elected representatives, the organization and functioning of RLAs and their financial regime. Moreover, as mentioned in the response to the recommendations this instrument grants a special status to the North West and South West Regions.

239- Some bodies set up or maintained by the said Code were put into operation. These are: the Regional Councils, which are the deliberating bodies in charge of managing regions; members of these councils took an oath in January 2021; the National Decentralization Board, the organisation of which was laid down by Decree No. 2020/676 of 3 November 2020 and which is in charge of the follow-up and evaluation of the implementation of decentralisation; the Interministerial Committee of Local Services, set up by Decree No. 2020/689 of 4 November 2020 and which is in charge of preparing and following up the devolution of powers and resources to RLAs; the National Committee of Public Finance organised by Decree No. 2020/6635/PM of 21 December 2020 and which is in charge of the following-up optimum mobilisation of RLAs' revenue and proper management of local finance.

240- Numerous instruments were signed concerning the devolution of powers, finance and management of local resources (See §25, 407, 630 and 631). For instance, Decree No. 2022 /354 of 9 August 2022 to lay down conditions for carrying out municipal policing was signed in a context characterised by recurring incidents (sometimes deadly) involving agents of the municipal police. This Decree, provides for conditions to set up a municipal police, its missions,

¹¹² About 334,091,014.24 Euros.

¹¹³ About 32,125,074.050 Euros.

its functioning, including the training of its members and supervision of the use of force and relationship with forces of law and order. In the same vein, Order No. 2/A/MINDDEVEL of 8 January 2024 to define the code of ethics for officers in charge of municipal policing was signed.

241- In 2024, the National School of Local Administration (NASLA) trained the first batch of 99 officers in charge of municipal policing from several RLAs. This school set up by Decree No. 2020/111 of 2 March 2020 is in charge of training RLAs' personnel and stakeholders. From its opening to 2024, 3,850 students which are mostly youths, benefited from initial, continuous and specific training.

242- On the initiative of MINDDEVEL, about 1,500 council stakeholders were trained on various themes from September 2019 to 2024 as mentioned in the following table:

Table 2: Trainings for Council Stakeholders at the Initiative of MINDDEVEL between September 2019 and 2024

YEAR	TRAININGS	TARGET
September 2019	Training on programme-budgeting	30 councils and city councils (local stakeholders -pilot batch)
2020	Capacity-building for Governors of Regions, Secretaries General of Governors' offices and Regional Delegates /MINDDEVEL after municipal and regional elections.	30 participants
2021	Training and information sessions for Regional Executives on the General Code of RLAs and its stakes, administrative drafting and functioning of regional councils.	10 Presidents of Councils and Regional Executive Councils
	Capacity-building seminars	Mayors of the South West, South, Far North, North, Adamawa and East Regions: 181 participants.
	Support of the 10 Regional Councils in drafting their programme budget	10 Presidents of Councils and Regional Executive Councils
	Session to train PIC on their duties	2 <i>Public Independent Conciliator</i> (PIC)
2022	Support to programme budgeting with the support of PRADEC-GIZ	39 councils and 10 Regions
	Technical support for budget drafting 2023	PIC for the North West and South West

	Support for the holding of citizen consultations for consideration of priorities of the populations prior to Budget Policy Discussions	24 councils
	Support for the holding of Budget Policy Discussions	26 councils of the North, Littoral and South West Regions
	Support to Regional Councils for the finalisation of their regional plans for development.	10 Regional Councils
	Awareness-raising workshop on the fight against hate speech	Local stakeholders of the East Region
2022	Capacity-building seminar on the Forest-Environment Project, on the management of revenue from forestry	60 councils of the East, Centre and South Regions
	Training of councillors on the legal framework applicable to RLAs, devolved powers, management of basic social services, legal status of RLAs, the financial regime, financial and management of the property of RLAs, organisation and functioning of councils, management of human resources in RLAs, local planning and implementation of projects of RLAs, decentralised cooperation, intercommunality and partnership: stakes and challenges.	507 councillors (Adamawa, South, Far North, North, East and South West)
2023		525 councillors (North West, Centre, Littoral and West)
	Training in archiving	9 regional focal points
	Training in drafting Council Development Plans following the new approach.	10 pilot councils
	Training in drafting Local Development and Sustainable Development Plans (PLADDT)	3 pilot councils
	Support in updating documents for the setting-up of Council Unions	5 Unions
	Support in the production of digitalised documents in the Wouri Division	6 Sub-divisional councils
2024	Workshop on awareness-raising and implementation of the tool for follow-up evaluation of the exercise of powers devolved	The Yaounde City Council, the 7 sub-divisional councils of Yaounde and the 9 councils of the Lekie Division, that is, 34

	to councils for Secretaries General and a collaborator	Secretaries General and collaborators.
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SOURCE: MINDLEVEL

§3: Preparation of Elections and Litigation relating to the Constitutionality of Laws

243- The preparation of elections was mainly characterised by amendments relating to the term of office of the Chairperson and members of the Constitutional Council, strengthening of the electoral system and the mobilisation of political parties.

A- Strengthening the Electoral System

244- The means of action of *Elections Cameroon* (ELECAM), institution in charge of supervising elections and referendums, was strengthened. For instance, its budget was increased by more than 23%, from CFAF 9,556,000,000¹¹⁴ in 2019 to CFAF 12,433,000,000¹¹⁵ in 2024. With regard to the managing team, by Decree No. 2022/297 of 12 July 2022, the term of office of the Chairperson, the vice-Chairperson and 10 members of the Electoral Board that started in 2017 was renewed for a period of 4 years. By Decree No. 2022/298 of 12 July 2022, 2 members of the Electoral Board were appointed. By Decree No. 2023/516 and 2023/517 of 16 November 2023 a new Director General of Elections and a Deputy Director General of Elections were appointed for a 5-year term of office.

245- Several initiatives conducted by ELECAM and supported by political parties and other stakeholders of the electoral system enabled the number of voters to increase from 6,853,498 on 31 August 2019 to 8,116,960 on 31 August 2024. The said initiatives included awareness-raising and deployment of outreach teams. In 2024, 1,254,438 persons newly registered on electoral lists, including 443,270 men (58.70%) and 311, 815 women (41.30%), 489,869 youths (64.88%), 654 persons with disabilities and 8,830 voters from the diaspora.

246- In a bid to pursue the dialogue between stakeholders of the electoral system, ELECAM organised several meetings to discuss with stakeholders of the electoral process and leaders of political parties especially. To make this initiative formal, on 8 August 2023 in Yaounde, the national platform for permanent consultation between ELECAM and other stakeholders of the electoral process was launched. The aim was to support and strengthen global transparency and the reliability of activities relating to the electoral process. This platform emanates from Resolution No. 32/R/ELECAM/CE of 22 December 2022 by the Electoral Board of ELECAM. The 2nd edition of this meeting was held on 26 November 2024 in Yaounde on the theme *electoral dialogue as pillar of democratic governance*. Within the framework of sharing experience and best practices, apart from international forums, ELECAM held discussions with elections supervisory bodies in other countries, diplomatic missions and UN and African agencies and CSOs working in the field of elections (**See Part F on Governance**).

¹¹⁴ About 14,584,312.09 Euros.

¹¹⁵ About 18,981,679. 39Euros.

B- The Mobilisation of Political Parties

247- As new political parties were granted authorisations, including 40 in 2023, the total number of political parties rose to 367 in 2024. Some political parties had their lead teams renewed or maintained, as the Cameroon Renaissance Movement-MRC (December 2023), SDF (October 2023), MDR (December 2022), PCRN (December 2022) and PADDEC (December 2024).

248- Some political parties such as MRC, SDF and MDR faced some internal crises, some of which led to judicial proceedings. For instance, the leadership crisis within PCRN was settled by some court decisions: by Administrative Courts (Ruling No. 196/OSE/TA/EBWA/2023 of 14 December 2023 by the President of the Ebolowa Administrative Court. Rejecting an application for stay of execution of an administrative document prohibiting a public demonstration envisaged by a faction), by lower courts (Ruling of 21 May 2024 of the Maroua CFI prohibiting a congress, Judgment No.4/CIV/TPI of 4 September 2024 by the Kaele CFI dismissing the request for annulment of a congress): and by Courts of Appeal (Ruling No.9/REF of 25 September 2024 by the Far North Court of Appeal confirming the Ruling of 21 May 2024).

C- Adjustments relating to the Term of Office of the President and Members of the Constitutional Council

249- By Decree No. 2024/10 of 18 January 2024; he renewed term of office of the President (Clément ATANGANA) and 8 members (ARRAY Florence Rita, BONDE Emmanuel, ESSOMBE Emile, Paul NCHOJI NKWI, BASKOUDA Jean-Baptiste, BAH Oumarou SANDA, LEKENE DONFACK Charles Etienne et Ahmadou TIDJANI). By Decree No. 2024/11 of 18 January 2024, 2 members (MINKOA SHE Adolphe and LOGMO MBELEK) were appointed to replace the deceased. On 2 April 2024, the President of the Constitutional Council and 9 members took oath before the Parliament meeting in a congress and on 2 July 2024, one of the members also took oath.

§ 4: Access to Public Service

250- From 2019 to 2024, competitive examinations and selection tests were organised by MINFOPRA, for a total of 42,038 positions in several fields¹¹⁶ as shown the table below.

Table 3: Recruitments in MINFOPRA from 2019 to 2024

Competitive examination	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total number	Proportion (%)

¹¹⁶ Including Judicial and Legal Services, Court Registries, financial authorities, agriculture, health, engineering, animal industries, computer science, telecommunications, sports, teaching, water and forestry, interpretation and translation.

Competitive Examinations for training except at ENAM	333	258	136	158	300	140	1,325	3%
Competitive Examinations for training at ENAM	474	516	428	325	335	285	2,363	6%
Professional Competitive Examinations	1,675	-	-	-	450	580	2,705	6%
Direct competitive examinations	1,161	1,700	790	390	1,210	170	5,421	13%
Special recruitments	1,000	782	617	100	100	3,372	5,971	14%
Selection Tests	4,110	4,016	3,130	200	290	145	11,891	28%
Recruitment of former temporary staff	4,246	6,123	1,993	-	-	-	12,362	29%
Grand Total	12,999	13,395	7,094	1,173	2,685	4,692	42,038	100%

Source: MINFOPRA

251- Among these competitive examinations, mention can be made of those of ENAM. In general, from 2019 to 2024, ENAM recruited 2,218 students distributed as follows: 1,768 students within the framework of classic competitive examinations (thus 88.86%) and 430 English speaking students within the framework of special recruitments of English-speaking Pupil Magistrates and Pupil Court Registrars (thus 21.14%). During the period under review, recruitment statistics can be disaggregated as follows: 49% of women, 51% of men, 16% of English-speaking students (within the framework of classic competitive examinations, that is which do not concern Common Law students), 12 students with motor disabilities, 1 visually impaired student, 3 students with albinism and 4 students from indigenous peoples (Baka).

252- Apart from the recruitments initiated by MINFOPRA, there were also those initiated by other administrations such as the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Basic Education, the Ministry of Higher Education and the General Delegation for National Security.

§ 5: Involvement of Cameroonian Citizens in Decision-making

253- Because of its scope, the Major National Dialogue was an instance where Cameroonian citizens were involved in decision-making in a memorable way. Other instances can be mentioned.

A- The Major National Dialogue

254- In an address to the Nation on 10 September 2019, the Head of State announced a Major National Dialogue to be held to constitutionally think about ways to meet the deepest needs of populations of the North West and South West Regions (facing a security crisis) and of all the other populations of Cameroon. 18 consultations were organised by the Government in Yaounde, Buea and Bamenda prior to the Major National Dialogue. The Government also sought contributions from a large number of Cameroonians, including Cameroonians from the diaspora.

255- Under the coordination of the Prime Minister, the Major National Dialogue held in Yaounde from 30 September to 4 October 2019 in the presence of several delegations made up of institutional stakeholders, Lawyers, civil society stakeholders, political leaders, religious authorities, trade unions leaders, students' organizations and independent personalities. During the dialogue, resolutions were adopted concerning the following areas: bilingualism, diversity, social cohesion, education system, legal system, return of refugees and internally displaced persons, reconstruction and development of areas in crisis, demobilisation, disarmament and reintegration of ex fighters, role of the diaspora and decentralisation. A committee in charge of following up the said resolutions was set up by Decree No. 2020/136 of 23 March 2020.

256- The adoption of the General decentralisation Code, the setting-up of NASLA, the establishment of a Presidential plan for the reconstruction and development of the North West and South West Regions (by Order No. 31/CAB/PM of 3 April 2020 on its organisation) and the special programme for the reconstruction and development of the Far North Region (by Order No. 44/CAB/PM of 24 May 2022) were among the achievements made after the Major National Dialogue.

B- Other Instances where Cameroonian Citizens were involved in Decision-making

257- The first instance is the consultation of traditional authorities by administrative authorities to appoint traditional rulers. Such consultations notably led to the designation of the Lamibés of Garoua, Maroua, Tibati, Yagoua and Mogode, of the Bamoun Sultan and the chiefs of the following villages or *cantons*: Akwa, Bakoko-Wouri, Bandja, Fotsetsa, Bandeng, Bankoh, Baba 2, Mankon, etc. In 2024, about sixty files relating to the approval of traditional rulers was finalised.

258- The second instance is that of consultations within the framework of the environmental impact studies of projects. From the evaluation phase to the review phase, consultations and public hearings were carried out. For example, in May 2022, August and September 2024, public hearings were held in relation to the following projects: construction and use of a complex of production and manufacturing of wood in Mangombe; Phase II of the Nsimalen-Yaounde road; and mining of an iron deposit in Ngovayang.

259- It is worth mentioning that Law No. 2021/15 of 9 July 2021 to organize and promote volunteering in Cameroon was adopted. One of its objectives is an initiation to the management of public affairs. It aims at the mobilisation and social valorisation of skills and human resources to do community service.

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260- In all, progress was made by the State in the promotion and protection of civil and political rights. Preventive and repressive measures were taken to consolidate the right to physical and moral integrity, and the right to liberty. These measures included the protection of road users and people inhabiting areas at risk, awareness-raising and sanctioning of members of the forces of law and order and setting up of the national mechanism for the prevention of torture. Compliance with procedural and institutional standards enabled the guarantee of the right to fair trial.

261- The rights of subscribers of electronic communications continued to be protected against non-respect of terms of reference by operators and by guidelines for the improvement of the said services. Moreover, access to reliable and secured information was ensured through continuation of diversification of information sources and the protection of journalists. Finalisation of the decentralisation process through the start of devolution of powers to Councils ensured participation of the people in the managing their own destiny.

262- Despite progress made by the State, the care of victims of rights violation and redress remained a concern.

CHAPTER 2: ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

263- The Growth and Employment Strategy Paper (GESP) which lapsed in 2019 and the NDS30 which is being implemented served as strategic pillars for progress in Cameroon between 2019 and 2024. Together with progress made in the legal framework, these decisive strategic documents, which ultimately aim at the development of the country by 2035, contributed to guaranteeing economic, social and cultural rights. Thus, despite numerous economic, security and health constraints, actions were undertaken to guarantee the right to property, right to decent work, right to health, right to education, right to culture, right to housing, right to social security, right to food, right to water and sanitation, and right to the protection of the family.

Section 1: Right to Property (Article 14)

264- Considering diverse challenges relating to land disputes, particularly between local communities, farmers and investors, modernising and simplifying procedures to obtain land titles, and incorporating sustainable development in land management, the State continued to integrate mechanisms aimed at land access and security for all strata of the population in its policy while ensuring protection against all forms of infringements.

§1: Mechanisms Guaranteeing Access to and Security of Land

265- Actions towards guaranteeing security of land and facilitating access to land included strengthening the legal framework, reconstituting State land reserves and guaranteeing land

security just to name these. Moreover, land rights of indigenous peoples were taken into consideration.

A: Strengthening the Legal Framework

266- In a bid to better satisfy needs relating to access to land and land security, the following instruments were signed: Decree No. 2019/208 of 25 April 2019 to transform the Urban and Rural Lands Development and Equipment Authority (MAETUR) into a public capital corporation (this decree seeks to implement MAETUR's Strategic Development Plan, updated for the period 2019-2024; Circular letter No. 0002/MINDCAF/CAB/LC of February 9, 2024 to establish a Certificate of Possession of Administratively Recognized Customary Land Rights (CPDFC-AR) as part of the procedure for processing applications for direct registration of occupied and/or exploited lands belonging to the State in order to obtain a land title; Circular Letter No. 4/MINDCAF/SG/D4/100 of 18 March 2022 on the estimation of costs and deadlines for land registration operations; Circular letter No. 7/LC/MINDCAF/CAB of 2 March 2020 relating to the enforcement of court judgements in land and property matters; Circular letter No. 2/LC/MINCAF/SG/D1/D12 of 2 February 2022 relating to conditions for the application of regulations concerning the acquisition, occupation and use of State-owned private land.

B: Reconstitution of State Land Reserves and Securing Land

267- The State initiated a land reserves reconstitution programme. As such, from 2019 to 2024, MINDCAF signed 324 orders of declaration of public utility to implement projects and construction of houses. Most of these orders were related to the provision of small and large surface areas, in particular 1,000 ha in the town of Mbankomo (Mefou-and-Akono Division) and 5 700ha in Massoumbou (Nkam Division).

Regarding securing of land, between 2019 and October 2024, MINDCAF issued 93,884 land titles to individuals and RLAs.

C: Recognising Land Rights of Indigenous Peoples

268- In order to protect the land rights of customary and indigenous communities, the fight against land grabbing intensified. Thus, the Minister of State Property, Surveys and Land Tenure signed several orders related to the cancellation of several land titles issued by third parties on their landed property. These measures were the result of Circular No. 1/CAB/PM of 1 April 2014 by the Prime Minister, Head of Government, relating to provisions applicable to investors as regards access to land in Cameroon, which set out the powers and surface areas that can be allocated. Moreover, several agreements were signed with Regional and Local Authorities to improve the living conditions of indigenous peoples.

269- Furthermore, REPALEAC continued implementing its five-year programme (2022-2027) dubbed "Programme to strengthen, protect and secure the land rights of indigenous and local communities in the Central African Forest"¹¹⁷. The objectives are to develop a political and social environment which guarantees the security of land and forest rights as well as the economic independence of indigenous and local communities while preserving the authenticity and the natural resources of the Congo Basin. Moreover, on 19 September 2023 in Bertoua, in the East Region, the Memorandum of Understanding¹¹⁸ between the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife, and the Indigenous association *Sanguia Baka Bumma'a Kpodé* (ASBABUK) was reviewed. It concerns access by the Baka community to the Lobeke, Nki, Boumba Bek National

¹¹⁷ This programme is implemented in Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon and Rwanda.

¹¹⁸ The first Memorandum of Understanding was signed in 2019 on the same topic.

Parks as well as the Ngoyla Reserve which was newly included in the Memorandum of Understanding.

270- In addition, following Judgment No. 108/FD/2023 of 25 May 2023 (Case between **M.J.** and **M.A.L.** vs the State of Cameroon), the Douala Administrative Court, deciding on a land matter, cancelled Decree No. 2020/4/PM of 9 January 2020 of the Prime Minister, Head of Government on expropriation for public utility and incorporation into State private land of pieces of land covering 2 hectares 63 ares 30 centi-ares which was required for the construction of hotels in the city of Douala, Wouri Division, Littoral Region. The Court also granted compensation to persons who lost their lands and/or whose properties were destroyed during the said construction works. The Court noted that *all acts subsequent to the said decree were null and void, especially: transfers of any kind made in favour of the State of Cameroon in the context of the expropriation in question or relating to it; land titles No. 924/WA, 925/WA and 926/WA drawn up on behalf of the State of Cameroon on the site, the subject of expropriation; the long lease contract signed in Yaoundé on 10 August 2020 between the State of Cameroon and Société Unipersonnelle on the land; any other document drawn up in execution of this decree*".

§2: Protecting Land Rights

271- The protection of land rights was guaranteed by the courts and Government departments and compensation was paid for cases of expropriation due to reasons of public utility.

A: Protection of Ownership Rights by Courts

272- Judicial or administrative courts considered several cases with the aim to protect land rights. Therefore, under administrative litigation, from 2019 to August 2023, 30,361 pre litigation petitions and 25,531 litigation files were received by MINDCAF¹¹⁹, and 9,624 were processed. Over the same period, 9,219 decisions were rendered by courts on land matters, with 2,701 in favour of the State and 7,082 against the State. Still within the same period, 5,337 illegal land titles were cancelled and 817 restored.

B: Compensation for Expropriation for Public Utility Purposes

273- From 2019 to September 2024, 230 decrees on compensation were signed for 37,751 persons, giving a total compensation cost of CFAF 80,281,948,505¹²⁰. The following decrees serve as examples: Decree No. 2020/2945/PM of 30 June 2020 to compensate persons who lost their land rights and/or whose property was destroyed during the construction of the 90 KV “Nyom 2-Ngouso” line, Mefou-and-Afamba Division which grants compensation to 26 persons to the tune of CFA F 127,646 737¹²¹; Decree No. 2020/3220/PM of 17 July 2020 to compensate persons who lost their land rights and/or whose property was destroyed during the construction of the shoreline of the 225 kv Ngaoundéré-Tibati electrical line construction project in Vina Division, Adamawa Region (granting compensation of CFA,F 775,455,095¹²²); Decree No. 2024/02595/PM of 1 June 2024 to compensate persons

¹²⁰About 122,567,860.31 Euros.

¹²¹ About 194,880.51 Euros...

¹²² About 1,183,900.91 Euros.

who lost their land rights and/or whose property was destroyed during the construction of the 225 Kv lines, transformer sub-stations and access ways under the interconnection project between the South Interconnected Network (RIS) and the North Interconnected Network (RIN) in Mbam and Kim Division, Centre Region for a total cost of CFAF 2,680,407,386¹²³ ; Decree No. 2024/2604/PM of 4 July 2024 to compensate persons whose property was destroyed while executing the works to secure and extend the network of the koutaba Airport area at a place called “Koundja” in the Noun Division, West Region for a total sum of CFA F 35,173,500¹²⁴.

Section 2: Right to Decent Work (Article 15)

274- The right to work was guaranteed through the promotion of employability and decent work, as well as the protection of workers’ rights and institutional innovations among others. Moreover, actions were carried out to promote the right to work for indigenous people.

§1: Promotion of Employability and Self-Employment

275- With a view to promoting self-employment, Law No. 2019/4 of 25 April 2019 framework bill governing social economy in Cameroon was promulgated. According to this law, organisations and companies of the social economy which were granted the status of social economy unit are registered in the general register for social economy units at the Ministry of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises, Social Economy Handicrafts (MINPMEESA). These social economy units may receive grants from the administration and RLAs, donations and legacies, as well as funds from calls for public donation. Common initiative groups, associations, mutual companies and cooperatives shall be eligible for such funds.

276- In order to guarantee youth employability, the National Youth Observatory (ONJ)¹²⁵ was created by Order No. 7/CAB/PM of 18 February 2022. This Observatory is a hub for referring youths to facilities adapted to their needs and its mission is to: welcome youths, listen to them and guide them; promote communication and dialogue with the youth; and carry out opinion polls to identify concerns and the needs of young people. More specifically, the Observatory matches youth training and employment applications with integration opportunities offered by diverse partners of the Ministry of Youth and Civic Education (MINJEC) as part of a digital platform which can be accessed on the website www.onjcameroun.cm. Moreover, MINJEC rolled out the biometric youth card managed by the Observatory. Young people holding this card enjoy products and services at preferential rates, especially training scholarships in MINJEC partner institutions. Close to 6,564 biometric youth cards were established.

§2: Institutional Innovations

¹²³ About 4,092,225.02 Euros.

¹²⁴ About 53,700 Euros.

¹²⁵ This is a facility which promotes a youth-oriented approach, giving value to young people, facilitating access to employment and information on and for the youth, strategic intelligence on youth affairs.

277- Pursuant to Decree No. 2023/368 of 28 August 2023, the National Employment Fund (NEF) was reorganised. Among the innovations, the financial supervisory authority of NEF is henceforth MINFI and its technical supervisory authority is the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training (MINEFOP), instead of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MINTSS). The NEF financial year which ran from 1 July to 30 June of the next year pursuant to Decree No. 90/805 of 27 April 1990, runs from 1 January to 31 December as per the new law. This reorganisation aims to strengthen operational efficiency of this entity.

278- Decree No. 2023/237 of 4 May 2023 to lay down the establishment and organisation of the National Trainer Training and Programmes Development Centre (NTTPDC) was signed. Placed under the supervisory authority of MINEFOP, the missions of the NTTPDC includes in-service training of trainers in all trades, training and developing the pedagogic and adult education skills of trainers and staff of public and private institutions, conducting prospective studies on pedagogic and adult education trends in the professional environment, conducting research and providing support for the development of engineering in vocational training, incorporating digital technologies in the preparation, organisation and evaluation of training programmes, supporting RLAs and companies in training engineering, developing, introducing, approving and reviewing reference materials, training programmes and manuals, carrying out all activities relating to the development of technical and professional skills as well as training engineering.

279- The Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Promotion Agency (APME) was reorganised by Decree No. 2023/336 of 8 August 2023. This decree, which repealed certain provisions of Decree No. 2018/629 of 25 October 2018 extended the missions of APME and resolved the problem of budget instability faced by the Agency.

280- Moreover, the Ministry of Youth and Civic Education signed Decision No. 6-2023 of 21 February 2023 on the change, reorganisation and functioning of the project to implement the National Youth Integration Fund (FONIJ)¹²⁶ into the Project to implement the Guarantee Fund for Young Entrepreneurs (FOGAJEUNE). The Objectives of FOGAJEUNE include ensuring provision of technical and financial services to Cameroonian entrepreneurs (in Cameroon or the diaspora) aged between 18 and 35 years, through two windows, a direct financing window¹²⁷ and a credit window¹²⁸. FOGAJEUNE provides 50% funding for the projects.

§3: Promotion of Decent Work

¹²⁶ FONIJ was created by Decision No. 10/2016/D/MINJEC/CAB of 23 February 2016 and its missions were to promote youth integration in productions circles by funding their innovative productive projects and providing subsidies for organisations that prepare and support them in self-employment and entrepreneurship.

¹²⁷ This window targets young entrepreneurs, who have individual projects by giving them subsidies, low-interest loans, following the zero rate procedures manual;

¹²⁸ This window targets young entrepreneurs from around or the diaspora and their partners, including those receiving funding from the State and other Government socio-economic integration programmes for youths seeking additional funding to expand their companies, alone or in a group, following an established guarantee mechanism.

281- The promotion of decent work targeted, among others, training, professional integration and increase in salaries as well as family allowances.

A: Training and Professional Integration Actions

282- Decree No. 2023/232 of 4 May 2023 to lay down conditions for implementing Law No. 2019/8 of 25 April 2019 to institute the Petroleum Code was adopted. This Decree requires holders of a petroleum contract to create jobs and wealth for Cameroonians.

283- The State also carried out other actions in favour of young people including training and support to youth integration, through the Project to Support the Socio-Economic Resilience of Vulnerable Youth in the Northern Regions of Cameroon (PARSE) implemented in partnership with the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), and the revamping of the Youth Connect Cameroon initiative to better pair young people with employment opportunities.

284- Between 2020 and 2024, through its sub-programmes' transparency of the labour market, vocational training and support towards business creation, NEF contributed to the training and professional integration of job seekers.

285- Under the transparency of the labour market sub-programme, NEF received, interviewed and guided 346,442 job seekers. In order to propose the Curriculum Vitae of job seekers to employers, NEF carried out 306,355 visits to companies and contributed to finding paid work to 190,676 job seekers.

286- Furthermore, under the vocational training sub-programme, 3,006 graduate job seekers were placed in pre-service trainings within companies to acquire skills and professional experience to boost their employment after two years. Moreover, 317 youths without professional qualifications received skills training in order to meet market employment needs and 3,763 others received training in small trades, support on innovative cultural techniques to help them develop income-generating activities upon completion. As part of the support towards business creation sub-programme, 1,975 projects were funded within the period considered including 368 individual projects and 1,435 grouped self-employed. These projects created a total of 2,761 jobs.

B: Increase in Salaries and Family Allowances

287- The security crises plaguing the world, especially the Russo-Ukrainian war had an impact on the world economy and repercussions on Africa, especially in Cameroon where inflation increased despite efforts made by the State towards resilience. This challenging situation was characterised by successive increases in the price of fuel, and then increases in salaries. Regarding developments on the increase in salaries, see **§53, 101 and 491)**

§4: Actions to Promote the Right to Work for Indigenous People

288- The National Development Plan for indigenous people (PNDPA 2021-2025) was drafted and distributed. It aims at giving the population access to all social services, enjoyment of their fundamental rights and their active participation in the development of Cameroon by 2035. This plan also has 10 thrusts, including promoting the well-being of indigenous peoples, access to employment and training for indigenous youth, promoting the know-how of indigenous people and facilitating the development of economic activities within indigenous communities.

289- The State adopted an inclusive policy for access to employment for indigenous peoples. For instance, in the Mbororo community, in 2022 and 2023, there was recruitment of 9 gendarmes, 11 soldiers, a State registered nurse and one person was admitted into EMIA. Moreover, the Mbororos were promoted to posts of responsibility including the Head of Private Secretariat at the Prime Minister's Office, a Regional Delegate at the Ministry of Public Service and Administrative Reform and a Director at the Senate.

§5: Protection of Worker's Rights

290- Protection of worker's rights continued both at the administrative and judicial level.

A: Administrative Protection of Worker's Rights

291- In a bid to assess working conditions and prevent professional conflicts or risks, inspection visits to companies continued. Between 2019 and 2021, a total of 15,928 inspections visits were recorded during which violations of the law and labour regulations were noted and close to 2,078 formal notices were addressed. Over the same period, 20,818 reports of the conciliation procedure between employers and workers were drawn up by labour inspectors following consideration and resolution of individual and collective labour disputes.

B: Judicial Protection of Worker's Rights

292- Some courts recorded several labour disputes most of which were initiated by former employees. Out of about 19,752 cases registered between 2020 and 2023, 16,977 were initiated by workers and 2,775 by employers.

293- Moreover, according to statistics, within the same period, about 9,117 cases were tried with 5,844 judgments in favour of workers and 2,898¹²⁹ in favour of employers.

Some sanctions imposed on employers are reflected in the following decisions:

- In its judgment No. 2/SOC of 14 June 2021, the Menoua High Court ordered Express Union Finance S.A to pay Ms **K.M.B.** Spouse of **P.** the sum of CFAF 24,064 947¹³⁰, for wrongful dismissal. The said court also ordered this company to issue to Ms **K.M.B** a work certificate as well as 20 original copy payslips which she

¹²⁹ This figure accounts for previous matters pending before 2019 which were judged within the period under review.

¹³⁰ About 36,740.38 Euros.

- requested, subject to a fine of CFAF 1,000¹³¹ per day of delay from the date of the judgment.
- According to judgment No. 3/SOC/TGI of 27 April 2022, the Nyong-and-So'o HC ordered *Société Africaine d'Assurance et de Réassurance (SAAR) S.A.* to pay the sum of CFAF 79,016,203¹³² to its former employee **A.Y.G.**, for violation of Article 60 of the national collective agreement for insurance companies granting employees the 13th-month salary and bonuses, unilateral reduction of salary, non-entitlement to leave, illegal tax deductions, unjustified deductions for a claim of debt and failure to pay dues.
 - In addition, for wrongful dismissal, the Wouri HC through judgment No. 194/SOC of 2 August 2023, ordered *Société Atlantique Assurances Cameroun IARDT*, to pay Mr **J.E.E.J.**, the sum of CFAF 39,389,103¹³³ distributed as follows: CFAF 3,745,748¹³⁴ for the salary for the month of August 2022; CFAF 6,742,364¹³⁵ for paid leave allowance; CFAF 11,237,244¹³⁶ for payment in lieu of notice; CFAF 4,994,344¹³⁷ as compensation for termination of employment; and CFAF 12,669,403¹³⁸ as damages for unlawful dismissal.

Section 3: The Right to Health (Article 16)

294- Developing a high-performance healthcare system that promotes the health of the population was a major concern for the State. Actions taken to achieve this included, the strengthening of the legal, strategic framework, health promotion, preventing and managing diseases, improving on the health of specific categories including the mother, adolescents and children as well as enhancing the availability of health facilities. As regards accessibility to health, the operationalisation of the Universal Health Coverage (UHC) was a great stride forward.

§1: Legal and Strategic Framework

295- Both the legal and strategic framework relating to the right to health were improved upon.

A: Legal Framework

296- With regards to the ratification of international instruments, Decree No. 2021/440 of 20 August 2021 to ratify the Treaty for the Establishment of the African Medicines Agency adopted at Addis-Ababa, Ethiopia on 11 February 2019, was signed.

¹³¹ About 1.53 Euros.

¹³² About 120, 635.42 Euros.

¹³³ About 60,136.04 Euros.

¹³⁴ About 5,718.70 Euros.

¹³⁵ About 10,293.69 Euros.

¹³⁶ About 17,156.10 Euros.

¹³⁷ About 7,624.95 Euros.

¹³⁸ About 19,342.6 Euros.

297- Traditional medicine was valorised through Law No. 2024/018 of 23 December 2024 relating to the organization and practice of traditional medicine in Cameroon was adopted, purpose of which is to foster the development of traditional medicine and thereby ensure public access to healthcare. (Section 1). As per the said Law, traditional medicine forms an integral part of the Cameroon Health Care system (Section 2). The Law defines key terms and sets out the conditions for the practice of traditional medicine, collaboration and control of the practice of traditional medicine (chapter 3), protection and sustainable use of traditional medicine, and associated traditional knowledge, (chapter 4) and sets up a national order of traditional health practitioners and provides for offences and penalties.

298- Furthermore, 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 was signed. Article 2 of the Decree clearly states which powers are devolved to the Regions¹³⁹.

299- In order to strengthen human reproduction, Law No 2022/014 of 14 July 2022 relating to Medically Assisted Reproduction was adopted. Section 2 of the law provides that Medically Assisted Reproduction (MAR), shall include artificial insemination, *in vitro* fertilization and gamete and embryo transfer and states those who are entitled to benefit from MAR. Other issues dealt with concern the age of the beneficiaries (section 11), facilities competent to carry out medically assisted reproduction. The law also provides that MAR shall be carried out with respect for human dignity, ethics and deontology, human personality and family (section 4).

300- Another legal instrument adopted was Law No. 2022/008 of 27 April 2022 relating to medical research involving human subjects in Cameroon. It lays down principles and rules applicable to health research, in particular, clinical trials and intervention studies, with the aim to protect persons involved in health research. As per section 9, the implementation of any medical research project must adhere to medical standards that promote and ensure respect for all humans and protect their health and rights. The Law further specifies the rights of persons participating in research, among which their right to be clearly informed about the project and to give their consent in writing (section 11).

B: Strategic Framework

301- Improvement of the strategic framework was at the general level and at the level of specific diseases

1: General Strategic Framework

¹³⁹They concern: construction of categories three and four 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 organization and management of the supply of essential drugs, reagents and medical devices, in accordance with the national health policy.

302- The Health Sector Strategy (HSS) 2016-2027 was updated to 2020-2030 to align with the National Development Strategy 2020-2030 (NDS30). The updated (HSS) 2020-2030 is the document that makes it possible to operationalize the orientations of the NDS30.

303- During the 2021-2025 programmatic cycle, the orientations of the HSS 2020-2030 are operationalized through the National Health Development Plan (NHDP) (2021-2025). It is a common working document for stakeholders of the health sector which aims at federating the efforts of all stakeholders in the health sector, including the Ministry of Public health, partner administrations and civil society.

304- Cameroon having taken an international commitment to draft a National Compact between the State of the Republic of Cameroon and its Development Partners to accompany the implementation of the NHSP 2021-2025¹⁴⁰. The signing ceremony for the said National Compact took place in Yaounde on 2 May 2024¹⁴¹. This is an agreement negotiated and signed for a fixed period, by which all stakeholders in the health sector undertake to implement and respect the national health priorities defined and described in the NHSP. The Compact shall help increase efforts and resources in the health sector to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs, notably the UHC.

305- The National Strategic Plan for Community Health (PSNSC) 2021-2025 was adopted with the aim to lay the foundation of a sustainable community-directed interventions in order to improve the performance indicators of public health programmes, in particular maternal and child health indicators, indicators for the fight against priority diseases, and population health indicators in general, in all communities in Cameroon's health districts.

2: Strategic Framework as concerns Particular Diseases

306- Plans were adopted for certain Communicable priority diseases including HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and viral hepatitis.

307- The 2024-2030 National Strategic Plan for the fight against HIV and STDs (NSP) with the aim of using differentiated approaches to contribute to the elimination of HIV, tuberculosis, viral hepatitis and sexually transmitted infections (STDs) by 2030, and ensuring quality coverage for all target populations and vulnerable groups¹⁴². The new Strategy was adopted following the expiration of the 2021-2023 NSP. Also, 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.

¹⁴⁰ One of the challenges to be met by the 2021-2025 NHSP is to get the stakeholders in the healthcare sector to combine their efforts effectively.

¹⁴¹ The Compact will make it possible to: (i) strengthen the strategic alignment of stakeholders, (ii) improve consultation and collaboration between the government and development partners, (iii) improve visibility on long-term funding for the sector and enhance results-based management, (iv) strengthen the coordination of players and reduce transaction costs, or the management of development aid, (v) strengthen the transparency and mutual accountability of all development partners, (vi) accelerate the implementation of the priorities of the PNDS, in particular those contained in the health system transformation agenda.

¹⁴² 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.

308- The National Strategic Plan for the fight against viral hepatitis (2020-2024) was launched on 28 August 2020.

309- With regards to neglected tropical diseases, in 2023, the Strategic Plan for the Elimination of Onchocerciasis (PSEO) 2021-2030 was adopted on 30 January 2023 with its strategic axes including: strengthening field interventions in endemic areas; financial sustainability and partnership; and strengthening monitoring and evaluation, surveillance and operational research to accelerate the elimination of Onchocerciasis. Also adopted in the same year, was the Lymphatic Filariasis Morbidity Management and Incapacity Prevention Plan (PCMPI) 2022-2026 was also adopted on 30 January 2023 which has as pillars, training patients in lymphoedema management and training on hydrocele surgery.

310- Furthermore, the National Digital Health Strategic Plan (2020-2024) adopted on 16 January 2020 aimed to improve on information and technology infrastructure of the health information system and promote the use of data for clinical service management.

§2: Health Promotion

311- Among measures taken to promote health were those related to the living Environment of the Population and combatting malnutrition.

312- A national policy document on Hygiene was validated in 2019 and the fight against open defecation continued with Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) initiated in several villages including 270 in the East and Far North Regions. However, only 18.52% on 55% of Health Districts targeted practiced CLTS compared to when 2020, 40% of Health Districts targeted, practiced CLTS).

§3: Prevention and Management of Diseases

313- Eliminating or reducing exposure to risks that might increase the chances of the occurrence of disease as well as management of diseases continued to be a priority.

A: Prevention of Diseases

314- Measures to prevent communicable diseases, included among others those for HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis through the implementation of national plans.

315- As concerns HIV/AIDS, condoms were distributed and awareness raising carried out to prevent its spread. Screening for the disease was also carried out.

Table 1: On distribution of condoms between 2019 and 2023

Year	Female condoms	Male condoms
2019	2,674,392	31,180,522

2020	2 918 908	41 057 011
2021	2 660 738	33 111 351
2022	2 846 635	29 122 272
2023	1 005 380	28 180 438

Source: MINSANTE

316- In 2023, 2 638 708 persons were screened for HIV, 2 948 355 in 2022, 3,479,989 in 2021, 19, 2,984,346 in 2020 in 7 regions¹⁴³. The HIV prevalence rate stood at 2,1% in 2023 and 2,4% in 2022 compared to 2.7 in 2018.

317- As regards malaria prevention, in 2019, 6,729,330 long-lasting insecticidal nets (LLINs), were provided to 2,526,882 households, covering a population of about 12,074,201 inhabitants in 7 Regions.¹⁴⁴

318- Furthermore, a laboratory dedicated to malaria research was inaugurated on 26 October 2021 at the Centre Pasteur in Yaounde.

319- As regards epidemic Prone Diseases, with the outbreak of Covid-19, State Strategy in the Health Sector to the fight the Covid-19 developed in 2020 was based on 8 main pillars¹⁴⁵. As concerns operational Measures, necessary logistics and infrastructure was provided. A call centre was set up with the toll-free number 1510; a digital platform was put in place to improve the management of call flows, isolation centres, and quarantine facilities for suspected cases not requiring hospitalization. International and local partners supported the State in the acquisition of material to fight Covid-19. This included masks, isolation gowns, medical oxygen supply, hand sanitizers, ambulances, and medicines among others.

320- Other measures taken to prevent the spread of Covid-19 was vaccination. Hence, by Decision No.1211/D/MINSANTE/SG/DPML of 12 April 2021, a commission responsible for the release of vaccine batches was established. Considering the fact that the percentage of the target population who received full doses of the Covid-19 vaccine was 4.7% (660,451 persons out of a target population of 13,944,491) at the end of 2021, the State intensified campaigns in 2022 which led to 3,251,175 receiving at least one dose of the vaccine representing 23.6% of the target population.

321- Vaccination was done with the aim of reducing premature mortality due to vaccine preventable diseases. This concerned the Penta 1, Penta 3 and RR1 vaccines among others.

¹⁴³ This does not include data from private laboratories

¹⁴⁴ Including the East, Far North, Littoral, North, Littoral, West and South Regions.

¹⁴⁵ Multisectoral coordination of actions; active monitoring for early detection of cases; deployment of investigation and rapid response teams; enhancing the capacity of laboratories; activation of infection prevention and control measures in health facilities and in the community; management of detected cases; communication on the risks of contamination; and logistical mobilization.

Table 2: Vaccination Rates for Penta 1, Penta 3 and RR1 between 2020 and 2024

Vaccine	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Penta 1	91	90.1	84.6	85.1	86.6
Penta 3	84.5	83.2	79.7	79.7	80.2
RR1	81.4	81.5	76.8	73.2	73.6

Source: MINSANTE

322- In 2021, some 4,116 health facilities offered vaccination services, an increase of 257 compared to 2020.

B: Management of Diseases

1) Priority Communicable Diseases

323- Diseases managed included malaria, HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis. Regarding malaria, in 2022, of the 2 063 695 confirmed cases of simple malaria, 1 819 101 (88.1%) were treated with 1st line ACTs and 1 878 449 (91.0%) with 2nd line ACTs and of the 1, 263, 686 confirmed cases of severe malaria of which 611 244 (48.4%) were treated with artesunate-1st line and 1 250 954 (99.0%) treated with injections. In 2023 of the 1,953,401 simple cases of malaria, 91.8% were treated with artemisinin-based combination therapy (ACT) in health facilities and out of the 1,024,353 cases of severe malaria, 55.4% were treated with Artesunate, 27.2% with Arthemether and 17.4% with Quinine. Furthermore, on 21 November 2023, Cameroon received 331,200 doses of the RTS,S, the first antimalarial vaccine recommended by the World Health Organization to be administered in 42 health districts, mostly for children aged 0–24 months.

324- HIV/AIDS patients started receiving completely free HIV related services in public health facilities from 1 January 2020 following the Communique of the Minister of Public Health on 4 April 2019. Before then, only ARVs were free. The services offered free of charge in public health facilities included consultations, medical booklets, biological follow-up, follow up tests (CD4 count and Viral Load) antiretrovirals (ARVs) and medication for the prevention of opportunistic Infections.

325- The number of persons on ARVs increased over the years as shown in the table below.

Table 3: Number of Persons on ARVs between 2019 and 2024

Year	Total Number of persons living with HIV/AIDS	Number of infected person on ARVs
2019	322,477	312,124
2020	358,000	350,818

2021	469,793	388,358
2022	480,228	424 771
2023	490 484	481 147
2024	513 000	449 000

Source: MINSANTE

326- In 2023, the death from HIV stood at 8 561 against 14 995 in 2019.

327- The care delivery network for persons living with HIV/AIDS was strengthened both in health facilities and in the community as the number of health facilities providing comprehensive care increased from 848 in 2018 to 2,909 in 2022 and the number of community based organisations from 101 in 2018 to 154 in 2021.

328- Tuberculosis continued to be treated free of charge in the context of the National Tuberculosis Control Programme. In 2023, there were 345 Tuberculosis Diagnostic and Treatment Centers compared to 327 in 2022 and 261 in 2019. In 2023, there were 25,705 cases of tuberculosis against 25,286 in 2022. Challenges faced by the Programme include difficulties in executing all planned visits to the field due to delays in the delivery of rolling stock.

2) Epidemic Prone Diseases

329- As regards Covid-19 particularly, operational teams for the fight against epidemics were reconfigured, biological tests for the detection of the virus, rapid screening tests by antigen were introduced and medicines were provided to the 10 regions. For example, by Service Note No. D31-170/MINSANTE/SG/DPM of 21 April 2020, the Minister of Public Health made available to all regions, an initial allocation of between 429 to 1,886 boxes of 100mg hydroxychloroquine tablets and 100 to 470 boxes of 250mg azitromycin per region. Field hospitals were set up and equipped in the 10 regions as well as the creation of treatment centres including the Specialized Centre for the Care of Covid-19Patients as an Annexe to the Yaounde Central hospital.

330- From the start of the pandemic to November 2020, there were 24,189 confirmed cases; 22,939 people cured and 437 deaths (The Cure rate was over 95%). By 29 December 2021, there were 109,666 confirmed cases with 1,853 deaths, 106,108 recoveries (96.8%) (in 2021 alone, there were 663 Covid-19deaths) and the end of 2022, there had been 124 234 confirmed cases, 1965 deaths and 122 230 recoveries (98.4%). In 2022, there were 14 568 new infections with 112 deaths. The infection and death rate from Covid-19reduced tremendously in 2023 as there were 840 cases bringing the number since the start of the disease in 2020 to 125 074. There were 9 deaths in 2023, taking the total number up to 1 974.

331- As regards response to the outbreak of cholera, the incident management system was strengthened at the central level and in affected regions to ensure that proper measures were

taken including vaccination campaigns like the one conducted in the Minawao refugee camp in the Far North Region from 14 to 18 November 2022. A total of 15,123 cases of cholera were recorded, including 303 deaths for a fatality rate of 2% in 2022.

3) Non Communicable Diseases

331- By the end of 2021, there were 13 dialysis Centres across the country¹⁴⁶. Dialysis centres inaugurated in 2022 and 2023 include: the dialysis centre at the Ngaoundere regional hospital (27 December 2022); the Bafoussam regional hospital (10 April 2023); the Laquintinie hospital in Douala (29 September 2023).). A great leap forward was made in the management of renal failure as the first successful kidney transplant in Cameroon took place at the Yaounde General Hospital on 10 November 2021. There were 124 kidney transplants in 2024, representing 3% of patients.

332- As regards mental health, in 2021, the « *Village de l'amour* » was set up at the Jamot Hospital in Yaounde, comprising 3 former premises of the outpatient psychiatry department. It is an initiative of the said hospital in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Health and the Yaounde city council which aims to provide care for mentally ill wandering persons "*Personnes Atteintes d'une Maladie Mentale et Errantes*". Patients are provided with psychological and psychiatric care, occupational therapy and rehabilitation and administered medicines. There are community teams available to administer care at home for patients who have been reintegrated into society.

§4: Reproductive, Maternal, Adolescent and Child Health

333- The State paid special attention to the health of the mother, the adolescent and the child through various actions. Measures were also taken to improve on reproductive health.

A: Reproductive Health

334- In addition to the Law on assisted procreation adopted in 2022, there were other initiatives including on family planning.

335- The 4th edition of the Survey on the availability of *contraceptive* methods and *maternal health lifesaving products in service delivery Points in Cameroon, 2020* was published in 2021.

336- The Minister of Public Health on 29 June 2023, launched the Family Planning 2030 (FP2030)¹⁴⁷ initiative in Cameroon. The country had on 8 June 2022, made 10 commitments

¹⁴⁶ Centre Region (3), Littoral Region (2), East Region (1 centre with 8 machines), Far North Region (1 centre with 4 machines), West Region (2), North Region (1 centre), North West Region (1 centre with 8 machines), South Region (1 centre with 3 machines), South West Region (1).

¹⁴⁷ 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

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.

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

B: Maternal Health

338- Pregnant women who attended antenatal clinic, were tested for HIV and put on treatment and were given intermittent preventive malaria treatment as well as LLINs. The table below shows the number of pregnant women who attended antenatal clinic and were tested for HIV between 2020 and 2024.

Table 4: number of pregnant women who attended antenatal clinic, were tested for HIV and received ARVs between 2020 and 2024.

Year	Number of women targeted for antenatal clinic	Number of women who attended antenatal clinic	Number tested for HIV	Number Positive	Number put on ARVs
2020	943,797	785 253 (83.2%)	709,016 (90.3%)		16 731
2021	1 003 172	869 313	824 243	19081	17,304
2022	1 025 427	853 191 (83.2%)	827,126	17,586	15,935
2023	1,049,683	826,115 (78.7%.)	807,236 (97.7%)	15, 378	13,899 (90.4%)
2024	1 088 041	758,364	677 159	12097	10 937

Source: MINSANTE

339- In 2022, some 580 242 pregnant women received the LLINs representing 76.0% compared to 384,345 in 2019 and 54% of women who attended antenatal clinic in 2021 received at least 3 doses of intermittent preventive treatment against malaria.

340- With regard to the Health Voucher, launched in 2014 which enables pregnant women to access healthcare at a low cost, as at March 2022, a total of 383 522 health vouchers were sold

ability to live healthy lives, make their own informed decisions about using contraception and having children, and participate as equals in society.

and there were 276 187 deliveries and 219 296 echographies performed on pregnant women. Following the launch of the UHC in April 2023, by December 2024, 10,194 caesareans had been covered up to 95%.

341- Furthermore, the 4th edition of the Survey on the availability of *contraceptive* methods and *maternal health lifesaving products in service delivery Points in Cameroon, 2020* published in 2021 showed that overall, medicines for children's health and maternal health were free respectively in 33% and 22% of health facilities surveyed (that charge for consultations).

C: Adolescent Health

342- The AIDS Free Holidays campaign took place yearly for the attention of youths. Peer educators carried out sensitisation and education, on HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases and risks associated with drug consumption. The 21st edition from 2 to 31 August 2023 reached 3,706,410 adolescents and young people aged 15 to 24. For the 18th edition in 2020 which incorporated Covid-19 awareness, 185,116 girls and 258,629 boys were reached.

343- Stakeholders were trained on reproductive health of adolescents including some 100 health staff in 6 regions in 2022. In addition, the awareness of adolescents was raised on reproductive health including 3,500 of them during activities marking the celebration of the 2022 Youth Day.

344- The National Strategic Plan for Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health and Nutrition (RMNCAH-Nut) for 2024-2030 was launched on 13 March 2025. Its general objective is contribute, by 2030, to the reduction of morbidity and mortality specific to reproductive health problems in mothers, newborns, children and adolescents, youths, women and men.

345- Furthermore, high-quality integrated family planning and sexual and reproductive health services tailored to adolescents were provided in health facilities including 97 of them with the support of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in 2024.

346- In 2020, under the patronage of the Minister of Youth and Civic Education and with the support of the United Nations Population Fund, 3 networks of youth associations set up sensitization platforms to accelerate access to sexual and reproductive health services including protection against HIV and Covid-19. This resulted in the sensitisation of more than 542,971 persons. The enhancement of the capacity of 23 community radio hosts and the training of approximately 291 youth leaders of associations. The training of peer educators and peer counsellors on the use of social media to conduct information campaigns, leadership as well as the fight against gender-based violence and harmful cultural practices within their respective communities. The associations also partnered with community radio stations to produce mass education programmes.

D: Child Health

1) Prevention of Diseases in Children

347- In order to prevent mother to child transmission of HIV (PMTCT), out of 23 210 children exposed to HIV in 2023, 12 538 received ARV prophylaxis (54%) and of the 13,414 in 2022, 12,655 (94.3%) received same compared to 91.38% in 2021. 80.3% of health facilities offered PMTC services in 2023. For additional measures on PMTC, (see §338).

348- Children received intermittent preventive treatment for malaria. In 2023, infants received the said treatment as follows: 1st dose, 248,969; 2nd dose, 184,722; 3rd dose, 138,782; 4th dose 110,157; 5th dose and above, 43,511. In July and October 2021, a campaign took place in the Far North and North Regions, during which nearly 1,900,000 children aged 3 to 59 months were administered intermittent preventive treatment for malaria.

349- Children were given micronutrient powder to enhance the nutritional value of their food. For example, between 1 January and 30 September 2023, 136,659 children between 6 and 23 months were given this powder. This was funded by UNICEF.

350- Children received various free vaccines including 5,044,347 who were vaccinated against polio under the UHC between April 2023 and December 2024.

2) Treatment of Diseases in Children

351- Some 1,080,424 free paediatric consultations were carried out in the context of the UHC between April 2023 and December 2024.

352- Children below 5 years, continued to be treated for malaria free of charge in public hospitals. In 2023 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 and of the 697,001 cases of confirmed simple malaria in children less than 5 years old, 93.9% were treated with Artemisinin-based combination treatments (ACTs). 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%). In 2022, some 1,381,582 children below 5 years were diagnosed with malaria and 680,298 were treated free of charge representing 49.2%.

353- Among the 490 484 persons estimated to be infected with HIV, 27 960 (5,7%) were children less than 15. 40,9% of these HIV infected children were on ARV while 78,4% of children who tested positive for HIV in 2023 started taking ARV.

354- As part of the implementation of activities of the National Programme on the Control of Schistosomiasis and Intestinal Helminthiasis, national campaigns were carried out to deworm particularly children. It is in this context that during the second round of the Mother and Child Health and Nutrition Action Week (SASNIM) held from 6 to 8 December 2024, more than one million children aged 6 to 59 months were targeted for vitamin A supplementation and those

from 12 to 59 months, for mebendazol and pregnant women were to receive intermittent treatment for malaria.

355- In 2022, 4,365,525 children aged 12 to 59 months and 4,891,491 aged 5 to 14 years were de-wormed against intestinal worms. Moreover, 3,511,468 children between 5 and 14 years were de-wormed against schistosomiasis. Also, in 2020, 2,550,279 children received treatment for intestinal worms and 994,140 for Schistosomiasis giving a coverage rate of 85% for Soil-Transmitted Helminths (STHs) and 71% for schistosomiasis (SCH) in 64 Health Districts in the Adamawa, East, the Far North, North and West Regions.

356- In 2019, the SASNM led to the training of 155,502 operational stakeholders, the deworming of 11,169,545 persons including 6,796,887 school-aged children (5-14) and 4,372,658 children of preschool age (0-59 months) during the SASNIM and the treatment of 7,149,304 people for Schistosomiasis. Joint National Immunisation Days against polio/SASNIM campaigns were organised including the one from 7 to 9 May 2021 in 191 health districts, during which 5,262,468 children aged 0-59 months received the bivalent oral poliovirus vaccine (bOPV), out of 6,042,816 targeted, representing a coverage of 87%. Moreover, children in the same age group received Vitamin A supplements and those aged 12-59 months were de-wormed with Mebendazole.

357- Children were also treated for other diseases. In 2023 for example, 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.

358- Within the framework of the Cameroon Clubfoot Care Project executed by the Cameroon Baptist Convention Health Services (CBCHS) in partnership with the Christian Blind Mission (CBM), between 2014 and 2022, some 2,048 children were treated of clubfoot, about 70% of them below 2 years.

§5: Strengthening of the Health System

359- The number of health facilities continued to increase while both physical and financial accessibility to healthcare generally was improved upon.

A: Availability of Healthcare Facilities.

360- In 2023, 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). In 2019, there were just 6,202 health facilities including 46% in the public sector, 41% in the private sector and 13% in the faith based sector.

B: Accessibility to Healthcare

361- The Universal Health Coverage became operational in 2023 and other measures were also implemented to improve both physical and financial accessibility to health care.

1: The Operationalisation of the Universal Health Coverage

362- 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 2023¹⁴⁸. 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. 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.

363- 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. 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, provision of care for the pathology; and for persons on dialysis, **the provision of** dialysis sessions for one year.

364- Concerning the cost of services, for persons living with HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis or onchocerciasis and children from 0 to 5 years, treatment is free, while prenatal consultations, deliveries and care for newborns is subject to a fee of CFAF 6,000¹⁴⁹ and for sessions of dialysis, the annual fee is CFAF 15,000¹⁵⁰.

365- The following results were achieved by the UHC within 20 months (between April 2023 and December 2024) : 3,524,687 persons enrolled in the UHC; 5,044,347 children vaccinated against polio; 1,080,424 free paediatric consultations carried out; and 10,194 caesarean sections covered up to 95%.

2: Other Measures to improve on Accessibility to Health Care

366- In an effort to ensure that health facilities are relatively evenly distributed to serve the population, Order No. 2039/MINSANTE of 25 May 2021 establishing the health map of Cameroon for the 2021-2025 period was signed. It mainly provides for minimum distances separating health facilities as well as the population that public health facilities should cover.

¹⁴⁸ 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.

¹⁴⁹ About 9,16 Euros.

¹⁵⁰ About 22.9 Euros.

This enables a wider geographical area to be covered which should enhance physical accessibility.

367- Measures were taken to make medicines more accessible. For example, 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 CFAF 100,000¹⁵¹ became free.

368- Furthermore, some treatments continued to be free including ARVs, Tuberculosis medicines, and malaria treatment for children below 5 years and pregnant women. (See §323, 324 and 364).

369- In a Communique of the Minister of Public Health dated 27 October 2020, hepatitis C treatment cost (specifically the protocol based on Sofosbuvir+Velpastavir 400/100 mg belonging to batch 3091996) was reduced to CFAF 25,000¹⁵² representing a 75% reduction. The prices of the other Hepatitis C treatment protocols however remained unchanged.

370- Also, ARVs and treatment of tuberculosis continued to be free of charge. (See §324 et seq).

371- Free screenings and treatment campaigns continued to be carried out, including a free surgical campaign at the Yaounde Central Hospital for persons with prostrate problems and Obstetric Fistula by the Cameroonian Association of Urologists in September 2022. The surgeries which usually cost between CFAF 400,000¹⁵³ to CFAF 500,000¹⁵⁴ were done free of charge. Other free screenings were carried out. (See §328)

372- Notwithstanding, initiatives undertaken to improve the public supply chain of medicines, challenges persisted due to the absence of a reference framework for the strategic orientation and coordination of interventions. It is consequently within this backdrop that the Strategic Plan to Strengthen the Public Supply Chain of Health Products in Cameroon (2022-2026) was adopted.

373- The priority interventions adopted to strengthen the public supply chain of health products in Cameroon and the recommended activities to be implemented are presented in the Strategy. The expected outcome of the Strategy is to achieve uninterrupted availability of health products through a public supply chain network which is able to provide patients with quality medicines at low cost while ensuring resilient and sustainable operations supported by effective governance and reporting.

374- 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,

¹⁵¹ About 152,67 Euros

¹⁵² About 38.17Euros.

¹⁵³ About 610.69Euros.

¹⁵⁴ About 763.36Euros.

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 4: Right to Education (Article 17)

375- In spite of the health crisis which obliged the State to make changes in educational governance, progress was recorded in the basic and secondary education sub-sectors. The higher education sub-sector also experienced some growth.

§1: Cross-Cutting Changes in Educational Governance

376- In order to ensure continuity of educational services during the Covid-19 pandemic which threatened the right to education in Cameroon between 2020 and 2021, the State took safeguard measures and introduced e-learning to basic, secondary and higher education in addition to the usual in-person education.

A: The E-Learning Initiative in Primary and Secondary Education

377- During the Covid-19 period, learning through television was introduced in the basic and secondary education sub-sectors with technical partners like the national television and radio station, Cameroon Radio Television (CRTV). From 6 April 2020, as from 8:30 am, lessons were broadcast to pupils over CRTV.

378- Other means were also used such as social media and more specifically the *WhatsApp* application. Several *WhatsApp* groups made up of pupils and parents were created per class and in different schools to ensure a smooth continuity of the right to education at primary and secondary level. To factor in the peculiarities of rural areas, activity booklets were designed.

379- Lessons were digitalised and secondary schools both in urban and in some rural areas prepared digital lessons or manuals at the Distance Education Centre. These manuals contained exercises to be done and were shared in *WhatsApp* groups which included parents. Educational content was also available on *YouTube* and on the MINESEC Distance Learning website.

380- Moreover, platforms such as <https://minesec-distancelearning.cm> gave pupils access to course material compliant with official programmes. In some rural areas, partners such as UNICEF and Evo-Solution supported the State by donating tablets into which resources produced at the Distance Education Centre were put before being sent to schools with connectivity or electricity challenges. Similarly, to overcome the problem of internet access, a Senator from the Mfoundi Division and a Member of Parliament from the Logone and Chari Division donated hard drives (in which the Distance Education Centre loaded resources) to schools in their respective electoral constituencies.

381- To lead the response plan against the spread of the pandemic, the State received \$1 000 000 as support from UNESCO to implement the “Education Cannot Wait (ECW)” Project over a period of 8 months (April to December 2020). The State received another financial support of \$11 000 000 to implement the emergency response plan against Covid-19 in the educational sector, from primary education to the first cycle of general secondary education, from July 2020 to December 2021.

B: E-learning in Higher Education

382- During the Covid-19 health crisis, universities switched to digital education. Digital education was implemented through applications such as *WhatsApp*, *telegram*, *Zoom*, *Jitsi*, *Google Classroom*, *MOODLE*, *Cisco Webex*, *Teams* and the creation of certain platforms for lessons and assessments. At the University of Ngaoundere for example the platform <http://foad.univ-ndere.cm> was dedicated to distance learning¹⁵⁵.

383- Digitalisation in higher education which remained in use even after Covid-19, improved through the set-up of technological infrastructure such as: the construction of a Cameroon inter-university network (RIC), distribution of 500,000 terminals for cyberspace access, interconnection of 10 University Digital Development Centres (CDNU), provision of high speed internet to the university community and development of the System for Integrated Management of Higher Education in Cameroon (SIGIRES).

384- The use of digital tools also took shape through: the configuration of smart classrooms allowing for the automatic recording of lessons using smart cameras and sensors to collect all data as classes unfold (these digital lessons are stored on the SIGIRES platform), development of captive portals with the use of facial recognition techniques to secure access to the Wifi network deployed on campuses to prevent third-party access, the creation of course databases, including discussions among students and between students and teachers, the use of data mining algorithms to identify the parts of the lessons not understood or considered difficult by the students, all of which allowed for updating lesson materials in order to improve the quality of the lessons.

§2: Progress Recorded in the Basic Education Sub-sector

385- Provision was made for infrastructure, teaching material and textbooks. In addition, actions were undertaken to improve preschool learning and literacy, fight against school dropout and increase human resources.

A: Provision of Infrastructure

386- Given the increase in number of pre-school children reaching 627,798 pupils during the 2022/2023 academic year compared to 596,197 during the 2021/2022 academic year, 13,317

¹⁵⁵ Pursuant to Memo No. 20202/9/UN/R/SG/DAAC of 23 March 2020, the Rector of the University of Ngaoundere instructed the heads of schools of the institution under his authority to connect to the said platform to give lectures.

schools were available (compared to 12,468 during the 2021/2022 academic year), with a total of 26,219 classrooms (compared to 24,644 during the 2021/2022 academic year).

387- Moreover, to handle the massive increase in numbers evaluated at 5,155,547 pupils at the primary level during the 2022/2023 academic year, 22,834 schools were operational, that is 13,287 government primary schools, 8,887 private primary schools and 660 community schools. Also, in 2023, there were 120,018 classrooms in these primary schools.

B: Provision of Teaching Material and Textbooks

388- Under the Cameroon Education Reform Support Programme (CERSP) for example, about 7,303,906 textbooks were distributed between 2020 and 2022 as follows: about 3,000 000 textbooks in 2020 to pupils of level 1 (*section d'initiation à la lecture et cours préparatoire*/classes 1 and 2); about 2 500,000 textbooks in 2021 to pupils of level 2 (*cours élémentaires première et deuxième années*/classes 3 and 4) and 1,803 906 textbooks mainly French and English in 2022 in government primary schools to pupils in *cours moyens première et deuxième année* for the French sub-system and classes 5 and 6 for the English sub-system.

389- Between 2020 and 2023, textbooks including 1,521,124 science and technology textbooks and 667,705 computer textbooks were distributed by MINEDUB to pupils in government primary schools among others.

C: Improving Preschool Learning and Literacy

390- Development of learning continued both at preschool and primary levels. At preschool level, development of learning was supported by RLAs, communities, CSOs and NGOs. This support helped increase government preschools infrastructure through construction and equipment in rural areas.

391- Regarding the continuation of literacy and non-formal basic education, the State produced survey tools to assess learning outcomes in Functional Literacy Centres (CAF) and Non-Formal Basic Education Centres (CEBNF). To master the map of these institutions, a CAF and CEBNF directory was made.

392- The State targeted and raised the awareness of illiterates aged 15 and above, especially out-of-school children or early school dropouts and people in regions with high illiteracy rates. Between 2019 and 2023, there were 28,666 literate children. The State also undertook other actions such as: improving and diversifying infrastructure and providing training in Literacy and Non-formal Education (AENF), 19 literacy centres constructed and 1 rehabilitated; functional literacy for youths and adults; capacity building for teachers in experimental schools for developing the promotion of national languages (from 2019 to 2023 for example, 19,950 children were trained in national languages); drafting and designing programmes and teaching materials in AENF as well as setting up pedagogic and didactic equipment; acquiring literacy kits and preparing a benchmark of harmonised skills for Non-Formal Basic Education in order to supervise children aged between 8 and 14 out-of-school or school dropouts.

D: The Fight against School Dropout

393- In localities with mining sites, notably in the East Region, campaigns were organised to raise awareness among parents on the abandonment of school by children to work in mines. In this vein, SONAMINES launched the operation “zero child in mines” since 2021 and carried out regular controls on sites where children were likely to be found. Activities of the 4th edition of this operation launched on 23 September 2024 in Garoua Boulai in the East Region resulted in the reception of teaching material by about 13 schools in the localities of Garoua Boulai, Betare Oya, Kette, Batouri and Colomine.

394- Moreover, preschool centres were created by the *Alliance pour la promotion de l'éducation et du développement* (APED) notably in Batouri town to accommodate children aged 3 to 6 whose parents work in the mines. The aim is to prevent all contact between the children and mining activity.

395- Decision No. 465/D/MINMIDT/SG/DAJ of 30 August 2021 prohibiting minors from accessing mining sites was signed. This decision prohibits all forms of work within exploration and mining sites involving children below the compulsory school age. Moreover, national and regional brigades as well as brigades for the control of mining activities of the Ministry of Mines, Industries and Technological Development carried out targeted raids to identify any violations and suggest appropriate corrective measures.

E: Recruitment of Teachers

396- Following the 3rd programme to recruit by contract, teachers who hold a Teacher's Grade I Certificate (CAPIEMP) launched in 2019, for a period of 4 years, about 9,000 teachers had already been recruited in 3 years, comprising 3,000 every year.

397- The number of preschool teachers increased on average yearly by 3.5% over the last five years, from the 2018/2019 academic year. Thus, it increased from 28,290 during the 2018/2019 academic year to 32,473 by the 2022/2023 academic year.

398- In primary schools, there were 120,262 teaching staff during the 2022/2023 academic year compared to 114,142 during the 2021/2022 academic year.

§3: Progress Recorded in the Secondary Education Sub-Sector

399- Access to education was guaranteed in a context characterised among other things, by the transfer of some powers to regions as regards secondary education, reduction of inequalities in access to schools and repression of barriers to the right to education.

A: Access to Education

400- The demand for education increased from 1,778 385 pupils during the 2018/2019 academic year to 2,009,141 pupils during the 2023/2024 academic year. To contain this massive increase in numbers, Cameroon had 4,384 public and private schools.

401- The gross enrolment rate was 45.56% in 2019 and increased to 47.4% in 2024, representing a 1.84% increase.

402- State subsidies to private secondary institutions¹⁵⁶ increased from CFAF 2,223,997,097¹⁵⁷ in 2019 to CFAF 2,500,000,000¹⁵⁸ in 2024.

403- To improve the quality of training, innovations were introduced in the organisation and functioning of Government teacher training colleges by Decree No. 2023/434 of 4 October 2023. These innovations include, the institution of bilingual training colleges, specialised training in early childhood education and inclusive education.

404- Regarding infrastructure, the number of schools increased from 4,204 schools (2,764 public schools and 1,440 private schools) in 2020 to 4,371 (2,808 public schools and 1,563 private secondary schools in 2022).

405- Moreover, in 2022, 61,758 classrooms were available across the nation, that is 35,002 in public schools and 26,756 in private schools. At Higher Teacher Training Colleges (HTTC) and Higher Technical Teacher Training Colleges (HTTTC), 1,515 classrooms went operational, including 799 in public schools and 716 in private schools. In public and private general, technical and vocational secondary and high schools, 66,089 school benches were available as well as 71,760 computers, with 12,381 for staff and 59,379 made available for pupils.

406- In the same year, there were 1 819 libraries, 2 770 computer laboratories, 1 315 scientific laboratories, 194 language laboratories, 9 290 toilets for girls, 9 097 toilets for boys, 2 338 mixed toilets for pupils and 2 262 school canteens. In addition, 1 297 858 pupils had textbooks and there were 77 555 teachers in secondary schools, that is 33 330 high school teachers, 27 156 secondary school teachers, 4 256 contract teachers and 12 813 part time teachers. The number of teachers working at the different HTTC was 1 920, comprising 1 899 civil servants (1 217 women and 682 men) and 21 contract teachers (9 women and 12 men). At HTTTC, there were 715 teachers (365 women and 350 men), that is 680 civil servants (346 women and 334 men), 25 contract teachers (14 women and 11 men) and 10 part time teachers (5 men and 5 women).

B: Transfer of Some Powers to Regions as regards Secondary Education

407- 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

¹⁵⁶ These institutions include private schools such as catholic schools, protestant schools, Islamic schools and lay schools.

¹⁵⁷ About 3,395,415.42 Euros.

¹⁵⁸ About 3,816,793.99 Euros

signed. The powers devolved concern: participation in the preparation and implementation of the national school map in regions; construction, extension, equipping, upkeep and maintenance of secondary and high schools in regions; recruitment and payment of support staff of these schools according to available budgetary resources; purchase of school equipment and supplies; distribution and award of scholarships and grants in secondary and high schools in regions; representation within the management and dialogue bodies of Government secondary and high schools; and support for council actions in the area of primary and nursery education.

408- Similarly, the Minister of Secondary Education signed Order No. 294/24/MINESEC/CAB of 26 June 2024 on specifications laying down the technical terms and conditions for the exercise of powers devolved by the State upon regions in the area of secondary education. This instrument provides that the State also plays an advisory support role to regions; a role which involves formulating opinions and suggestions as well as communicating information.

409- Concerning resources, according to the MINESEC Annual Work Plan for the 2024 financial year, the State transferred to regions the sum of CFAF 2,600,000,000¹⁵⁹.

C: Reducing Inequalities in Access to Schools

410- Inequalities in access to schools were reduced both for pupils and for teachers through the following actions: exemption from registration fees for pupils with disabilities and those displaced due to insecurity; payment of salaries for part time teachers in the Bakassi Peninsula¹⁶⁰; medical assistance to several teachers who were victims of insecurity through the Solidarity and Education Promotion Fund; aid to families of teachers and pupils who were victims of secessionist actions in the North West and South West Regions.

411- Moreover, activities enabling children to enjoy their right to education were carried out in the Far North, North West and South West regions plagued by insecurity. Some activities carried out include strengthening pedagogic follow-up of teachers through proximity supervision, provision of school and pedagogic kits to pupils and teachers, training of pedagogic supervisors and teachers on peace and living-together, awareness raising in communities to end actions against schools, calls for a return to peace and normalcy in the afore-mentioned regions and training of teachers on psychosocial support and reduction of risks of conflict and disasters in the school milieu.

412- As part of the Secondary Education and Skills Development Support Project for Growth and Employment (PADESCE), 10,175 girls from 36 secondary schools in the Adamawa, East, Far North and North regions received financial support during the 2023/2024 academic year for their studies amounting to CFAF 620,000,000¹⁶¹.

¹⁵⁹ About 3,969,465.65 Euros.

¹⁶⁰ Owing to the socio-economic situation, learners from these zones do not pay required contributions and Parent Teacher Association dues.

¹⁶¹ About 946,564.89 Euros

D: Combating Barriers to the Right to Education

413- There was a crackdown on Barriers to the right to education. Thus, through judgment No.10/CRIM of 22 February 2022, The Menoua HC found **E.R.**, Principal of The Santchou Bilingual High School, guilty of misappropriating public funds, notably the sum of CFAF 7,107 557¹⁶², which included Parent Teacher Association dues of the said High School. The accused was sentenced to 10 years in prison and to a fine of CFAF 57,815¹⁶³. The said Court removed the principal from office, prohibited him from holding any other position in an educational establishment and ordered publication of the judgement in the national daily newspaper “Cameroon Tribune”.

§4: Vibrant Higher Education and Scientific Research

414- In addition to incentives and actions to ensure effective access to education, the State also undertook to strengthen the legal framework in higher education, strengthen human resources in scientific research and higher education. The Decree on special rules and regulations for scientific research personnel and increase scientific research allowances was also signed.

A: Guarantees to Effective Access to Education

415- The University map was extended and personnel were reminded of their obligation of presence and assiduity. Circular No. 24/6/MINESUP/SG/IGS/DDES/DAJ of 24 October 2024 on the obligation of effective presence and assiduity of higher education personnel was signed. This instrument reminds teachers of the obligation to serve and devote themselves to service in accordance with the laws in force.

416- Faced with the massive increase in the number of students which grew from 350,498 in 2019 to 440,886 in 2023, the number of universities was increased. Hence, pursuant to Decree No. 2022/3 of 5 January 2022, the universities of Bertoua, Ebolowa and Garoua were set up, taking the number of State universities to 11, in addition to the Congo-Cameroon Inter-State University. To absorb the new holders of the *Baccalauréat* and GCE Advanced Level, that is, 578,660 persons between 2020 and 2023, 520 authorised private higher education institutions were operational in Cameroon in 2024.

B: Strengthening the Higher Education Legal Framework and Smooth Processing of Equivalences of Foreign Certificates

417- Law No. 2023/7 of 25 July 2023 on Higher Education Policy in Cameroon was adopted. Three major innovations emerge from this law: the advent of the University-Business and the Student-Entrepreneur; the institution of a National Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission which shall contribute to certification of courses offered; the classification of private higher education institutions with the aim to make them more competitive and efficient.

¹⁶² About 10,851.23 Euros.

¹⁶³ About 88.27 Euros.

418- To guarantee a fluent processing of equivalences of foreign certificates, the platform www.equivalence.cm was made operational.

C: Incentives

419- In order to sustain economic accessibility, scholarships and grants were continuously awarded to some students. Thus, 517 (2019) students received scholarships and grants and 1,100 (2019) others participated in holiday internship placements and work study programs.

420- Continuing the promotion of university excellence, the State granted awards for excellence to 90,000 students in 2019. Moreover, between the 2019/2020 and 2022/2023 academic years, 359 scholarships were awarded to students, that is, 50 in 2019/2020, 123 in 2020/2021, 96 in 2021/2022 and 90 in 2022/2023.

D: Special Rules and Regulations Governing Research Personnel and Increase in Scientific Research Allowances

421- Decree No. 2023/337 of 8 August 2023 to lay down the special rules and regulations governing research personnel was signed. This decree redefines recruitment and work conditions of research personnel in public research institutions, increases their basic index salary and reviews conditions for their retirement.

422- Moreover, research allowances were increased through Decree No. 2024/478 of 29 October 2024 to lay down the amounts and conditions of payment of allowances granted to research personnel in public research institutions¹⁶⁴.

E: Capacity Building for Human Resources Personnel on Scientific Research and Higher Education

423- A total of 402 researchers were recruited in research institutes between 2019 and 2023.

424- Moreover, in addition to recruitments through digital replacements, about 2,507 teachers were recruited between 2019 and 2023 in State Universities.

Section 5: The Right to Culture (Article 17 (2)).

425- The Legal Framework was enhanced through ratification of treaties and legislation at the national and the institutional framework was strengthened. Cultural Property continued to

¹⁶⁴ The research allowances to be paid monthly to each researcher increased as follows: from CFAF 120,000(183.21 Euros) to CFAF 140,000(213.74Euros) for Chief Research Officers, from CFAF 100,000(152.67Euros) to CFAF 130,000(198.47Euros) for Senior Research Officers, from CFAF 80,000(122.14 Euros) to CFAF 110,000(167.94 Euros) for Research Officers and from CFAF 60,000(91.60Euros) to CFAF 90,000(137.40Euros) for Research Assistants. In addition, the monthly technical proficiency allowances¹⁶⁴ were also increased, for Research Officers from CFAF 30,000(45.80 Euros) to CFAF 40,000(61.06Euros) and for Research Assistants from CFAF 20,000(30.53Euros) to CFAF 30,000.

be made available and significant efforts were made towards the preservation of intangible heritage, including inscription of the Ngouon and Ngondo Festivals on the UNESCO list of intangible cultural heritage. Furthermore, activities were organised to enable people have access to and participate in culture and the interests of artists were taken into consideration.

§1: Enhancement of the Legal and Institutional Framework

426- The legal framework relating to culture was enriched in areas including archives, books, traditional knowledge associated with genetic resource, artistic and cultural associations as well as official languages. The institutional framework relating to sports was also enhanced.

A: Strengthening of the Legal Framework

427- With regard to ratification of treaties relating to culture, Decree No. 2024/330 of 24 July 2024 relating to Cameroon's accession to the International Convention for the Protection of Performers, Producers of Phonograms and Broadcasting Organizations, adopted in Rome, Italy on 26 October 1961, was signed.

428- Law No. 2024/001 of 24 July 2024 to regulate archives in Cameroon was adopted. The objectives of the law are among others, to organise the archiving and preservation of the archival heritage; organise the traceability, control and security of archives; foster the inclusion of an archival culture in national development strategies; and ensure the financing of the development and modernisation of the national archives system. The main innovations of the law include the clarification of the terms used in the field of archives, the creation of a public body responsible for national archiving management, and the financial sustainability of the said system through a special fund to finance the development and modernisation of archives.

429- For the first time, legislation was passed specific to the book sector through Law No.2021/24 of 16 December 2021 governing the organization and promotion of the book sector in Cameroon. The Law lays down the structuring of the book sector, regulates interactions between stakeholders and establishes incentives for the development and professionalisation of the sector, encouraging cultural diversity in the sector as well as the local printing and publishing of books.

430- Additionally, Law No. 2021/014 of 09 July 2021 to Govern Access to Genetic Resources, their Derivatives, Traditional Knowledge Associated with Genetic Resource and their Fair and Equitable Sharing of the Benefits Arising from their Utilization¹⁶⁵, was adopted.

¹⁶⁵ As per section 2, the purpose of the Law is to:

- (a) support the valorization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge to promote their conservation and sustainable use;
- (b) regulate access to genetic resources, their derivatives and/or associated traditional knowledge;
- (c) ensure the involvement of indigenous and local communities in sharing the benefits arising from the use of genetic resources or associated traditional knowledge;
- (d) promote and encourage the use of research findings as well as the documentation of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge;
- (e) contribute to improving the living conditions of indigenous and local communities;

431- Furthermore, Decree No. 2020/4601/PM of 21 September 2020 to lay down the modalities for the application of certain provisions of Law No 2013/003 of 18 April 2013 governing cultural heritage in Cameroon was signed.

432- Equally, Law No. 2020/011 of 20 July 2020 to regulate artistic and cultural associations in Cameroon was adopted which aims to regulate the creation and functioning of artistic and cultural associations. This was the first time a specific law was adopted in this domain, as formerly, artistic and cultural associations were regulated by Law No 90/53 of 19 December 1990 on freedom of association. The Law allows artists and artistic and cultural stakeholders to create artistic and cultural associations throughout the country for the promotion of the spirit of creativity, the dissemination of culture and the preservation of national and universal cultural heritage by organising artistic and cultural activities.

433- Also, Law No.2019/019 of 24 December 2019 on the promotion of official languages in Cameroon lays emphasis on the fact that the official languages of Cameroon, French and English, shall be of equal value and citizens shall be served in the public service in either language of their choice.

434- The Minister of Arts and Culture further signed Order N° 20/0006/MINAC/CAB of 21/02/2020 classifying elements of intangible cultural heritage as national heritage, through which action is taken to preserve, conserve and safeguard cultural and natural heritage, and improve the sustainability of towns and human settlements.

B: Strengthening of the Institutional Framework

435- The National Sports Facilities and Equipment Board was established through Decree No.2022/384 of 17 August 2022 to lay down the establishment, organisation and functioning of the National Sports Facilities and Equipment Board. The mission of the Board is to ensure the upkeep, repair, operation, safety, development and sustainability of sports facilities and equipment.

436- By Decision No. 021/0259/MINAC/DPC of 7 June 2021 of the Minister of Arts and Culture, the ministerial committee responsible for monitoring major building sites or major infrastructural projects related to cultural heritage and the preparation of the file for the inscription of Bimbia and associated sites on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

§2: Availability of Cultural Property

437- Initiatives continued to be taken to improve on the availability of cultural infrastructure and preserve archival material.

(f) improve the contribution of biodiversity to human development and well-being;
(g) discover and make available genetic information.

438- Public spending in Cameroon on the preservation, protection and conservation of cultural and natural heritage between 2019 and 2024 was as follows: 810,000,000¹⁶⁶(2019); 1 660,000,000¹⁶⁷(2021); 1 212,500,000¹⁶⁸(2022); 2 126,600,000¹⁶⁹ (2023); 1,448,000,000¹⁷⁰ (2024).

A: Enhancement of Cultural Infrastructure

439- In order to enhance the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of the Sawa people, the *Maison de la culture Sawa*, (in English, House of Sawa Culture and in the Duala language, "*Mukanda mua Ngondo*") was officially inaugurated on 14 December 2023 in Douala. The building which covers 1,760 m² of the site's overall surface area of 5,000 m² cost around CFAF 6,000,000,000¹⁷¹, 75% of which was provided by the Douala City Council and 25% by the traditional assembly of the Sawa people.

440- New cultural centres constructed in 2022 included the Ntui cultural centre, the Nanga Eboko cultural centre and the Haut Sanaga cultural centre. The construction of the ceremonial hall dubbed, *salle de convivialité*, the art galleries and shops for various artistic objects at the National Museum, were completed in 2021 and the Centre Regional Museum was among infrastructure rehabilitated.

B: Preservation of Archives

441- One of the highlights in the preservation of archives in 2019 was the receipt by the Minister of Arts and Culture from the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany on 24 September 2019 in Yaounde, of a hard disk containing 10,000 electronic files which trace the period of German occupation in Cameroon between 1884 and 1916. The files contain photographs, films, letters and notes, mainly manuscripts. These archives were hitherto not available in Cameroon.

442- With regard to the collection of archival material, in 2022, 230 issues of the Official Gazette published between 1994 and 2022 were made available to the National Archives, bringing the total number available at the institution to 18,831. 8,903 archival material of which 5,670 monographs and 3,233 serial publications were processed in 2022 within the framework of the project for the setting up of the Historical Library of the National Archives.

443- On 14 December 2023, the National Archives officially received the original of 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.

¹⁶⁶ About 1,236 , 641.22Euros.

¹⁶⁷ About 2,534,351.14Euros.

¹⁶⁸About 1,851, 145.04Euros.

¹⁶⁹About 3,246.717.56Euros.

¹⁷⁰ About 2,210,687.02Euros

¹⁷¹ About 9,160,305.34Euros

§3: Preservation of Intangible Cultural Heritage

444- Measures were also taken to preserve the 2 official languages of Cameroon as well as mother languages. Efforts started years ago to have the Ngouon and Ngondo festivals inscribed on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity yielded positive results in 2023 and 2024 respectively.

A: Promotion of Official Languages

445- The National Commission for the Promotion of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism (NCPBM) carried out missions to evaluate the use of English and French in various Public Administrations, public and parapublic enterprises and other institutions to follow up and evaluate the implementation of Law No 2019/019 of 24 December 2019 on the promotion of official languages. In 2022, it visited 70 public and private enterprises in Yaounde and the 10 headquarters Regional and Local Authorities (RLAs). At the end of the mission, recommendations were made to improve on the practice of bilingualism by RLAs. Between September and October 2022, the same Commission visited some public hospitals¹⁷², state universities and defence and security training centres¹⁷³.

446- Furthermore, the National Bilingualism Week was celebrated yearly in order to promote the use of the country's 2 official languages. Activities to showcase the use of these languages include, awareness raising campaigns, book exhibitions, bilingual news presentations, sketches and inter school competitions. The 18th edition in 2023, launched in Mbandjock, was celebrated under the theme *Bilingualism: A Window to Cultures and Technologies, a Human Capital Development Tool for the Emergence of Cameroon* and the 19th edition in 2024, launched in Bertoua, under the theme *Bilingualism: Vector for Digitalization of Education and the Promotion of Civic and Moral Values for a Peaceful and Emergent Cameroon*.

447- The NCPBM, as part of its permanent activity, received and processed petitions grounded on discrimination based on language and culture. Some 95 petitions were received on grounds of discrimination, 60 through toll free number (1518) and 35 through written petitions. Among actions taken, was the forwarding of complaints to competent institutions to handle same.

B: The Promotion of Mother Languages

448- According to 2022 statistics from the National Institute of Statistics, 4% of the indigenous languages of Cameroon had disappeared since 1950 and 10% of them were neglected. Progress was made in fostering the teaching of the mother tongues in schools especially through the selection of 5 mother languages (Ewondo, Duala, Basa'a, Ghomala and Ffulde being taught in schools. There were 43 of such schools in 2022.

¹⁷² Regional Hospital Garoua, Regional Hospital Limbe and Regional Hospital Annex Buea

¹⁷³ Gendarmerie Training Centres, Combined Services Military Academy, National Advanced Police School, Police training College

449- During the celebration of the International Mother Language Day, activities including awareness raising, exhibitions and round table discussion were organised by various public institutions. For the 2022 edition, these activities were organised by MINEDUB from 14 to 21 February 2024 in Yaounde.

C: Inscription of the Ngouon and Ngondo Festivals on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity

450- In order to safeguard the intangible heritage of the country, pursuant to the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, adopted in 2003, Cameroon embarked on measures to have intangible cultural heritage inscribed on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. This led to the inscription of the Ngouon festival of the Bamoun people in the West Region on the said list in 2023. The Ngouon refers to a series of rituals between the Sultan of the Bamouns and his people, aimed at promoting dialogue, harmony and peace. The rituals are observed over a period of 3 days every 2 years in early December.

451- The Ngondo Festival of the sawa people was also inscribed on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in December 2024. The Ngondo takes place annually from September to the first Sunday of December and is marked by a festive part and a sacred part. The popular and festive part) is marked by a caravan touring the traditional Sawa areas with artistic performances, traditional wrestling competitions, a crafts fair among others. The sacred part takes place on the banks of the wouri river in Douala on the first Sunday of December where people gather to watch the departure of a sacred canoe. A person dives from the sacred canoe into the river with a basket containing the wishes and grievances of the Sawa people and emerges after some time with a message from the oracles. The message is relayed to Sawa chiefs, then shared with the public. The message governs the life of the community until the next celebration.

D: Inventory of Intangible Cultural Heritage

452- The inventory of intangible cultural assets that started in 2016 continued. Between 2020 and 2024, through its sectoral programme on the Conservation of Art and Culture, some CFAF over 8,045,225,800¹⁷⁴ was mobilised for the said inventory in the 10 regions. Approximately 600 cultural assets had been classified as national heritage since the start of the inventory.

§4: Organisation of and the Access to Activities

453- People had the opportunity to participate in sporting activities in and out of the country. Cultural and artistic festivals, exhibitions and other activities were also organised.

A: Sporting Activities

454- Cameroon organised major sporting events including the Total-Energies Africa Cup of Nations (Total-Energies AFCON) 2021 that took place from 9 January to 6 February 2022 in 5

¹⁷⁴ About 12,282,787.48Euros.

towns (Yaounde, Douala, Limbe, Garoua and Bafoussam); the 21st African Women's Volleyball Championship from 16 to 24 August 2023 in Yaounde; and the Yaounde African Open 2023 (Judo) in Yaounde on 18 and 19 November 2023. Such events usually being cultural vectors, Cameroon's cultural diversity was widely displayed through local dance choreographies and outfits by the *Ensemble National* and other cultural and artistic actors during the opening and closing ceremonies.

455- Cameroonian sporting teams participated in competitions in and out of the country yearly. In 2022, the State financed the participation of national sporting teams in 59 international competitions, including 43 out of the country. The teams obtained 382 medals including 128 gold, 120 silver and 134 bronze.

456- The Mount Cameroon Race of Hope which is organised in Buea in the South West Region every year attracts hundreds of athletes and requires them to run over a distance of about 42 kilometres. The 2022 edition was on 19 February 2022, the 2023 edition on 25 February 2023 (it saw the participation of 600 athletes from 13 countries), and the 2024 edition on 24 February 2024.

457- Furthermore, the National School Games Federation (FENASSCO) A for primary schools and the FENASSCO B for secondary schools which enables pupils and students showcase their talents in various disciplines¹⁷⁵ were organised yearly with the exception of 2020 and 2021 due to Covid-19. The 2022 edition of the FENASSCO) A games from 20 to 24 June 2022 in Yaounde saw the participation of over 10,400 primary school pupils. The National University Sports Federation (FENASU) Games were also organised and at the 2023 edition held in Ngaoundere from 28 April to 8 May 2023, some 22 universities and higher private institutions participated with 3 480 athletes in 10 sporting disciplines.

458- The National Youth Council also organised the National Extracurricular Sports Games (JENASESCO) from 17 to 22 December 2023. It brought together 150 schools, 100 associations and 1,829 athletes who participated in 41 different sporting disciplines. The event provided a platform for young people from diverse backgrounds, including those from the informal sector, to showcase their talents. It attracted 20,000 visitors and 1,000 exhibitors.

B: Cultural and Artistic festivals, Exhibitions other Activities

459- The *Ensemble National* through its various components including the Orchestra, Ballet, Dance, and Theatre gave exquisite performances to the public during the celebration of international days and other events.

460- On 1 August 2024, The Museum of the Chancellery of National Orders was inaugurated and now forms part of the National Museum. It is a place rich in history and symbols for

¹⁷⁵ Including Judo, athletics, gymnastics, arm wrestling, football, basketball, volleyball, badminton, table tennis, futsal and shot put.

Cameroon. It comprises precious distinctions and coats of arms of the Republic and the Order of Sporting Merit.

461- Furthermore, the 2nd, 3rd and 4th editions of the Yaounde International Book Fair were held respectively in 2022, 2023 and 2024. The target for the 2022 edition held from 19 to 27 February was 1,000 exhibitors from 30 countries and 2,700 visitors. Some of the discussions of the 2024 edition which held from 14 to 17 March focused on the role books play in the social development of young people as well as how the culture of reading can be perpetuated as a factor in development.

462- The 7th and 8th edition of the International Crafts Fair of Cameroon (SIARC) were held respectfully in 2023 and 2024. The target for the 8th edition that held in Yaounde on 22 and 31 July 2024 was 10,000 visitors for 510 exhibition stands.

463- Moreover, activities were organized in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the 1972 World Heritage Convention between 6 and 19 October 2024 in Cameroon on behalf of the Sub African Region. The activities included a forum for young professionals on world heritage, a forum for heritage experts and a conference of ministers in charge of culture and forestry.

464- Additionally, on 30 June 2022, the event, Yaounde, the capital of the Islamic World was organised. For 6 months, Yaounde, the capital city of Cameroon was the “capital of the culture of the Islamic world.” The culture of the Islamic world as well as the historical and cultural heritage of Yaounde were showcased through events such as conferences, fairs, literary competitions and musical shows.

§5: Protection of the Material and Moral Interests of Artists

465- Royalties continued to be collected and distributed to artists and the State provided support for the organisation of cultural Events and Artistic Creation.

A: Collection and Distribution of Royalties

466- The Commission for the Control of Collective Management Bodies (CCCMB) supervised the distribution of the following sums between the 5 collective management bodies (35% for operating cost) and artists (65%) as follows; For 2020; CFAF427,706,526¹⁷⁶; 2022; CFAF 488,184,615¹⁷⁷; 2023; CFAF310, 000,000¹⁷⁸.

B: Support for the Organisation of Cultural Events and Artistic Creation

467- The State, through the Special Appropriations Account for Support to Cultural Policies granted subventions yearly to support cultural events and artistic creations including in 2021

¹⁷⁶ About 652,987.6Euros

¹⁷⁷ About 745,320.02Euros.

¹⁷⁸About 473,282.44Euros.

when it granted CFAF 16 000 000¹⁷⁹ for the creation, promotion and dissemination of Cameroonian cultural works; CFAF 14 100 000¹⁸⁰ for Support to the creation, publication and distribution of musical works and CFAF 1 000 000 for events relating to literary works.

468- For the year 2023, the following amount were allocated: CFAF 18,150,000¹⁸¹ for music; CFAF 55,600,000¹⁸² for Cinema; CFAF 11,750,000¹⁸³ for festivals and CFAF 750,000¹⁸⁴ for literary arts.

Section 6: Right to Housing

469- The housing sector in Cameroon faced several challenges relating to urban growth, the development of informal settlements, and the impact of security and health crises such as Covid-19. To overcome them, the State launched initiatives to increase provision of affordable and sustainable housing and continued urban development operations.

§1: Increasing Housing Supply

470- Actions taken included development of the legal framework, continuation of low-cost houses construction programmes and projects, diversification of public-private construction partnerships and housing finance.

A: Improving the Legal Framework

471- The legal framework was strengthened with the adoption of certain instruments such as Order No. 2022/12060/PM of 30 December 2022 to establish the general regime for planning contracts and city contracts between the Government and RLAs, Order No. 2022/354 of 9 August 2022 to lay down conditions for carrying out municipal policing, Order No. 7/E/2/MINH DU/CAB of 2 November 2022 to specify the terms and conditions for the exercise of certain powers transferred by the State to regions in the area of town planning; Joint Instruction of MINH DU and MINFI No. 759/MINH DU/MINFI of 20 September 2024 to set income ceilings for accessing low-cost housing in Cameroon in order to make the said houses more accessible.

472- Moreover, in order to reconcile population growth with the need for housing, a partnership agreement was signed on 18 February 2019 between MINH DU and the company *Cimenteries du Cameroun* (CIMENCAM) for the supply of cement; another was signed on 31 May 2021 in Yaoundé between MINH DU, SIC, the Local Material Promotion Authority (MIPROMALO) and CIMENCAM for the implementation of the “Earth-Cement” Project. This

¹⁷⁹ About 24, 427. 48 Euros.

¹⁸⁰ About 21, 526.72 Euros.

¹⁸¹ About 27,709.82Euros.

¹⁸² About 84,885.50Euros.

¹⁸³ About 17,938.93Euros.

¹⁸⁴ About 1,145.4Euros.

project, which is based on the construction of 2000 houses with earth-cement material, led to the construction of 200 earth-cement houses in the city of Pitoa during its pilot phase.

473- Regarding the diversification of financing methods, the Government not only resorted to a financial co-administration method with competent housing construction institutions but also to private financial groups.

474- Hence, between 2019 and 2022, for the purpose of financial inclusion and to consider the challenges of access to housing faced by some underprivileged social groups, the Cameroon Housing Loan Fund (CFC) granted 1,165 loans to individuals amounting to CFAF 17,725 552195¹⁸⁵ to build 1,571 houses and acquire 99 building lots (2019); CFAF 17,484 727 381¹⁸⁶ to build 1,497 houses and purchase building plots (2021); and CFAF 14,472,077,577¹⁸⁷ to build 1,324 houses and buy 5 building plots (2023). In 2023, 187 loans were granted to purchase low-cost houses in Douala/Mbanga Bakoko and 63 for those at Olembe/Yaounde. Moreover, in 2022, agreements signed between CFC and micro finance institutions led to the opening of a funding line of CFAF 3,000,000,000¹⁸⁸ to cover the funding of real estate projects of informal sector workers and salary earners who are not eligible for CFC products.

B: Continuation of Projects and Programmes for Housing Construction and Management

475- Programmes for the construction of already launched low-cost houses continued. As part of the programme to construct 10,000 low-cost houses and 50,000 building plots, particularly for the phase to construct 5,635 houses across the national territory which began in 2009, by 2022, 2,840 were completed and the pilot phase II to build 60 houses out of the 3,060 new pilot houses started on 19 December 2023 with the laying of the foundation stone for the construction. The construction of all these houses over a surface area of 20 ha in Olembe, Yaounde is expected to span a period of 4 years.

476- Regarding the phase relating to the construction of 1,675 low-cost houses using State funds, 660 were completed in 2023 (160 in Yaounde and 500 in Douala), with 120 occupied in Olembe and 300 in Mbanga Bakoko.

477- Regarding the Three-Year Emergency Plan for Economic Growth (PLANUT) which started in 2016, the construction of houses was completed at 75% in 2021, hence about 600 houses were received out of 800 intended for the project. The 200 houses in the cities of Bamenda and Buea were not received due to the security situation therein.

478- Moreover, the building called “Abiergus Residence”, product of a framework contract between the State and Cameroon Real Estate Corporation (SIC) which comprises 24 apartments over a surface area of 1,300 m³ at *Cité verte* in Yaounde, was received in 2021. Lease agreement

¹⁸⁵About 27,061,911.74Euros.

¹⁸⁶ About 26,694,240.28Euros.

¹⁸⁷ About 22,094,774.93Euros.

¹⁸⁸ About 4,580,152.67Euros.

No. 0292 was signed for this building on 25 October 2021 between SIC and the Ministry of State Property, Surveys and Land Tenure (MINDCAF).

479- As part of the implementation of the Municipal Housing Construction Programme (PCCM) led by FEICOM, CFC and United Councils and Cities of Cameroon (CVUC), a total of 79 houses were received in 2023 with an initial credit line of CFAF 10,000 000 000¹⁸⁹. The 2nd credit line of CFAF 20,000,000,000¹⁹⁰ signed in 2020 for the construction of 1,200 houses benefited 42 councils by 31 December 2023, for a total amount of CFAF 17,000,000,000¹⁹¹.

480- Within this programme, several councils received funding from MINHDU to develop their municipal councils through its Public Investment Budget and in the form of credits transferred. Thus, for construction of Roads and various networks, the Nguibassal and Pete-Bandjoun councils received CFAF 50,000,000¹⁹² and CFAF 100,000,000¹⁹³ respectively in 2019; in 2021, the Mengang, Nguibassal and Bogo councils received CFAF 35,000,000¹⁹⁴, CFAF 50,000,000 and CFAF 50,000 000; the Biyouha and Mengong Councils as well as the Garoua City Council received CFAF 99,000,000¹⁹⁵, CFAF 99,000,000 and CFAF 99,500,000¹⁹⁶ in 2022; and Bangou Council received CFAF 100,000,000 in 2023.

§2: Urban Development Operations

481- In a bid to make cities habitable, the State continued works involving restructuring and sanitation, disposal of household refuse and rain water drainage from precarious neighbourhoods.

482- With a view to developing slums the Inclusive and Resilient Cities Development Project (PDVIR) aims to take 651,000 persons out of the slums. For the year 2024, a total surface area of 40.31ha of slums were developed. Even more, in Bafoussam, MAETUR's intervention in 2019 led to the structuring of 18% of all under structured areas, comprising 7 neighbourhoods over a surface area of 164 ha, with 16,621 persons benefiting. In Garoua, in 2020, MAETUR also helped structure 23% of all under structured zones, comprising 12 neighbourhoods with 15,216 persons benefiting, over a surface area of 151 ha.

483- The results of the 5th Cameroon Household Survey (ECAM 5) revealed that in 2022, 13% of the population (18 % in urban areas against 7% in rural areas compared to 14.9% in 2014 and 28.8% in 2017) were living in homes using safely managed sanitation services including a hand washing station with water and soap available thanks to the liquid sanitation project.

¹⁸⁹About 15,267,175.57 Euros.

¹⁹⁰About 30,534,351.14 Euros.

¹⁹¹About 25,954,198.47 Euros.

¹⁹²About 76,335.88 Euros.

¹⁹³About 152,671.75 Euros.

¹⁹⁴About 53,435.11 Euros.

¹⁹⁵About 151,145.03 Euros.

¹⁹⁶About 151,908.39 Euros.

484- As regards disposal of household waste, the total volume of waste produced or collected in cities amounts to about 1,421,871 tons of waste per year. In 2023, the average tonnage of waste for Douala and Yaounde, collected daily in each of these cities was between 1,400 to 1,800 m³. A “Clean Cities” competition was launched in 2019 by the Government through MINHDU to promote concrete local actions towards hygiene and sanitation in all councils. In search of sustainable waste management models which will be localised and implemented following a participatory approach, MINHDU has since the same year been implementing the Rwandan hygiene and sanitation model in 4 pilot councils in Yaounde and Douala.

485- Regarding rainwater drainage, MINHDU constructed drainages in cities. The second phase of the Yaounde Sanitation Project (PADY) launched in 2019 led to the construction of 18 km of drainage channels in Yaounde. The Douala Storm Drainage Project¹⁹⁷ on its part, which aims to reduce floods and exposure of the population to water borne diseases led to the development of 33 concrete channels and the opening of drainage outlets by 2024.

Section 7: Right to Social Security

486- The promotion of social security was guaranteed and violations of social security obligations were sanctioned.

§1: Promotion of Social Security and Increase in some Pensions

487- The normative framework for social security was strengthened and some pensions were revised upwards. Moreover, the National Social Insurance Fund (NSIF) consistently paid social security benefits.

A: Strengthening the Normative Framework

488- Law No. 2023/11 of 25 July 2023 governing guarantees and debt recovery by public entities benefiting from the treasury’s preferential rights was adopted. Sections 3 and 6 of this law grant public entities such as NSIF a legal mortgage right which offers better guarantees for the enforced recovery of its social security debts. It is thanks to this law that the NSIF recovered funds amounting to CFAF 222,870 929 545¹⁹⁸ in 2023.

489- Through Decree No. 2022/311 of 20 July 2022, Cameroon ratified the Multilateral Convention on Social Security of the Inter-African Conference on Social Welfare (CIPRES), adopted in Dakar, Senegal, on 27 February 2006.

B: Upward Revision of Some Pensions and Payment of Social Security Benefits

¹⁹⁷ The project began in 2015. The 1st phase of works was completed in 2020 and the second phase began in 2021.

¹⁹⁸ About 340,260,961.14 Euros.

490- Decree No. 2020/376 of 8 July 2020 to fix the coefficient for the upward revision of certain old-age and incapacity pensions as well as death benefits granted by the National Social Insurance Fund which was signed led to a 20% upward revision of the previous pension levels which had not been reviewed automatically since the 2016 reform.

491- Thanks to Decree No. 2024/56 of 21 February 2024, family allowances paid to workers by NSIF and MINFI which was CFAF 2,800 since 2016¹⁹⁹ was increased to CFAF 4 500²⁰⁰.

§2: Social Protection

492- Employers who delayed with payment or who did not pay social security contributions of their employees were sanctioned. In 2022 and 2023 for example, close to 94,501 employers had not paid social security contributions of their employees, that is about 97,646 debt securities corresponding to a recovery balance amounting to CFAF 469,135,791,378²⁰¹. Actions for forced recovery were taken against them in addition to surcharges and penalties for late payment automatically generated for non-compliance with obligations to declare and pay.

493- As regards more recalcitrant employers, NSIF initiated judicial proceedings before criminal courts such as the Special Criminal Court for misappropriation of public funds. For example, evidence was provided to the specialised judicial police force in 2021 against 2 employers²⁰² whose combined social security debt amounted to CFAF 2,000,000,000²⁰³.

Section 8: Right to Food

494- In order to guarantee the right to food, the State of Cameroon adopted some general measures as well as measures relating to availability, accessibility and acceptability of foodstuff.

¹⁹⁹ Decree No. 2016/34 of 21 January 2016 to upgrade the amount of family allowances paid to workers.

²⁰⁰ About 6.87 Euros.

²⁰¹ About 716 237 849,43Euros.

²⁰² One of the employers in question whose debt was CFAF 1,000,000,000 (that is 1,526,717.56 Euros), NSIF presented the control and formal notice reports before prosecution which they had been notified of at the time and which they were unable to challenge the decision before the competent court within deadlines fixed by the Law. He rather chose to initiate proceedings to challenge the decision before ordinary courts which were not competent to hear disputes over recovery of social security contributions. The courts to which the case was referred, that is the Fundong CFI and the North West Court of Appeal declared they had jurisdiction and cancelled the NSIF social security debt. NSIF appealed to the Supreme Court which quashed the judgment of the North West Court of Appeal. Before the SCC, this employer claimed that the judgments of the Fundong CFI and North West Court of Appeal annulling the social security debt was to their advantage. He further stated that the NSIF had no grounds to take them before a criminal court, especially the SCC. The Supreme Court Judgment was produced before the SCC. The NSIF thus had the evidence of the said misappropriation, characterised by the non-payment by this employer of social security contributions deducted from the salaries of workers.

The situation of the other employer who was also prosecuted for misappropriating the sum of CFAF 1,000,000,000 (that is 1,526,717.56 Euros) was different. He was reported to the SCC by his employees who had asked the NSIF to issue a document attesting to the existence of social security debt. The NSIF produced control and formal notice reports before prosecution which revealed that this employer had been accumulating the said debt for over ten years.

²⁰³ About 3,053,435.11Euros

§1: General Measures

495- The normative, institutional and strategic frameworks were strengthened while the fight against extreme poverty and food insecurity as well as the consolidation of the import-substitution policy continued.

A- Strengthening the Normative, Institutional and Strategic Frameworks

496- In terms of laws, for health reasons, the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development banned the importation and registration of Paraquat-based pesticide formulations recognised as carcinogenic (Order No. 72/19/MINADER/SG/DRCQ/SDRP/SRP of 18 April 2019), withdrew certain phytosanitary products (Order No. 00000201 of 11 September 2023), and set the maximum residue levels for Ethephon and prohibited its usage in every other plant except for pineapple and rubber (Order No. 200/MINADER/CAB of 11 September 2023).

497- In order to control fraudulent increase in prices, the Minister of Trade through Order No. 94/MINCOMMERCE of 14 April 2022, made the prior submission of price lists for some consumer products compulsory (pasta, sardine in oil, margarine, etc.) requiring every new price list to be submitted for approval. In addition, by Order No. 95/MINCOMMERCE of the same day, the Minister set the list of products and services whose prices are subject to the prior approval procedure (milk, rice, fish, raw palm oil, refined vegetable oils, cooking salt, sugar, bread and pastry, flour, mineral water, beer, etc.).

498- Furthermore, Decree No. 2015/1875/PM of 1 July 2015 instituting and laying down the terms and conditions for the implementation of the Pre-Shipment Conformity Assessment Programme for goods imported into the Republic of Cameroon was amended and supplemented by Decree No. 2021/3306/PM of 31 May 2021 which extended this programme to all imported products. Mention can also be made of the adoption of Law No. 2024/19 of 23 December 2024 to lay down the rules and regulations governing fisheries and aquaculture in Cameroon.

499- At the strategic level, to ensure coherence, actions were undertaken including: the national rice development strategy 2022-2030 (which aims to develop rainfed and irrigated rice to achieve production of 450,000 tons of paddy rice by 2025 and 750,000 tons by 2023); the 2024-2030 cashew value chain development strategy (projecting the production of 50,000 tons of cashew nuts by 2030); the 2020-2025 national agricultural seeds development plan (which aims at a sustainable relaunch of the seed sub-sector); and the integrated agro-pastoral and fisheries import-substitution plan for the three-year period 2024-2026 mentioned below (**§ 506 and 507**).

500- Strengthening the institutional framework included animal health and phytosanitary police among others. Thus, by Order No.43/CAB/PM of 23 May 2022, an Animal Health Emergency Operations Coordination Centre in charge of managing animal health emergency situations was created. In Ribao, Ntam, Mundemba, Bamiso, 4 new phytosanitary police posts were created at the land and maritime borders by Order No. 1 of 31 March 2022.

B- Fight Against Extreme Poverty and Food Insecurity

501- Cameroon executed projects aimed at mitigating financial risks, encouraging small productive investments, including in the agricultural sector and facilitating spending notably, on food. Hence, between 2013 and 2023, the Social Safety Nets Project (<https://projetfiletsociaux.cm/>) facilitated cash transfers of CFAF 54,400,000,000²⁰⁴ for 385,500 households, that is, 2,400 000 beneficiaries. The success of this project justified the launching of the Adaptive Social Safety Nets and Economic Inclusion Project (PFS-AIE) (2023-2028) which targets cash transfers to 356,000 beneficiary families. The PFS-AIE received support of USD 160,000,000 (CFAF 99,600,000,000²⁰⁵) from the World Bank for 217,500 beneficiary households and CFAF 18,000,000,000²⁰⁶ from the State of Cameroon for 138,500 beneficiaries. In 2023, 154,000 households received CFAF 738,004,830²⁰⁷ cash transfers from the World Bank and 96,000 households received CFAF 2,580,720,000²⁰⁸ from the State of Cameroon and C2D/FDA.

502- In 2024, PFS-AIE focused on continuous cash transfers to already targeted beneficiary households and targeting of new beneficiaries. As distributed in the table below, CFAF 7,175,000,000²⁰⁹ was transferred to 58,500 beneficiary households.

Table 5: Payment of Cash Transfers to Beneficiary Households in 2024

Programmes	Beneficiary Households			Amounts transferred to beneficiaries in CFAF ²¹⁰		
	State	WB	Total	State	WB	Total
OCT	14,000	22,000	36,000	1,080,000,000	3,320,000,000	4,400,000,000
ECT	0	12,500	12,500		1,875,000,000	1,875,000,000
LIW	0	10,000	10,000		900,000,000	900,000,000
Total	14,000	44,500	58,500	1,080,000,000	6,095,000,000	7,175,000,000

Source: MINEPAT

Key: WB: World Bank; OCT: Ordinary cash transfers; ECT: Emergency cash transfers; LIW: Labour-intensive work.

503- Launched in 2020 during a regional initiative led by the lake Chad Basin Commission, Lake Chad Region Recovery and Development Project (PROLAC) integrated in its 3rd

²⁰⁴ About 83,053,435.11 Euros.

²⁰⁵ About 152,061,068.70 Euros.

²⁰⁶ About 27,480,916.03 Euros.

²⁰⁷ About 1,126,724.93 Euros.

²⁰⁸ About 3,940,030.53 Euros.

²⁰⁹ About 10,954,216.47 Euros.

²¹⁰ CFAF 1,000,000 is equivalent to 1,524.49 Euros.

component the development of agricultural value chains to contribute to setting up income-generating activities. Having recorded over 80,000 direct beneficiaries and 300,000 indirect beneficiaries by 2024, PROLAC helped improve the living conditions and resilience of the population in 10 councils in the Logone- and-Chari Division, through development of water reservoirs, fodder area and hydro-agricultural areas (<https://prolac.cm/a-propos/>).

504- Launched in 2022 on the basis of the results of the grassroots poverty reduction sub-programme, the Economic Resilience Support Project, financed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to the tune of USD 4,801,997 (CFAF 2,989,243,132.50)²¹¹ contributed to poverty reduction in rural areas, with special attention given to improving access by young people to job opportunities, notably in the agricultural sector. This project helped strengthen agricultural value chains (in the cassava, beans, onion, rice, groundnut, cowpea and corn sectors, just to name these) in several councils and to support (with machines and equipment, etc.) dozens of organised groups and associations working in these sectors.

505- Moreover, a National Food and Nutritional Insecurity Response Plan in Cameroon was adopted in 2022. Coordinated by the National Programme for Monitoring and Strengthening of Food Security (PNVRSA) under the aegis of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MINADER), this Plan deployed food and nutrition security prevention and response measures such as food aid, malnutrition prevention and rehabilitation of community assets.

C- Consolidating the Import-Substitution Policy

506- With a view to boosting local production and consumption particularly of food sector, by strengthening agricultural supplies to ensure food self-sufficiency and the production of consumer products, the State launched the import-substitution policy in 2021. In 2024, to support local production, the Finance law allocated a budget of over CFAF 127,500,000,000²¹² for import-substitution, representing an increase of 10% compared to 2023. Similarly, since 2022, the finance laws have provided for tax and customs measures on the one hand and custom incentives for local producers, notably complete exemption from custom duties and taxes relating to prefabricated constructions using greenhouse gases, improved agricultural and animal seeds as well as to vaccines and medicines for veterinary usage; and on the other hand, introduction or increase of excise duties for some products such as meat and edible offal from cattle, goat, sheep and poultry species, natural honey, Irish potatoes, edible fruits, tea, coffee, and its derivatives, pepper, chili and ginger.

507- In a bid to serve as a catalyst to support the implementation of the said policy, an integrated agro-pastoral and fisheries import-substitution plan for the period 2024-2026 was adopted. The overall aim is to contribute to reducing the trade deficit, this Plan, estimated at CFAF 54,674,700,000²¹³, specifically aims at contributing to: facilitate development of private sector activities in the agro-pastoral sector on secured and developed spaces, contribute to

²¹¹ About 4,563,729.97Euros.

²¹² About 194,656,488.55 Euros.

²¹³ About 83,472,824.43 Euros.

increasing production and availability of local consumer products; and created a suitable environment for the development of agro-pastoral activities. Among achievements in 2024, is the securing of 200 000 hectares of land in the “Central Plain” with 3000 already developed by a private operator, 452 tons of seeds produced by the Institute of Agricultural Research for Development (IRAD) for priority foodstuff (wheat, rice, corn, millet/sorghum/soya, palm oil, etc.), 12,800 tons of locally produced flour, CFAF 750,000,000²¹⁴ granted for the purchase of paddy rice, and CFAF 700,000,000²¹⁵ allocated to support the production of palm oil.

508- In 2023, the import-substitution policy led to a 27% year-on-year decrease in financial resources devoted to importing wheat and rice.

§2: Measures Relating to Availability of Foodstuff

509- In order to ensure availability of foodstuff, measures taken focused on developing factors of production, and everything which had a positive impact on production.

A: Developing Factors of Production

510- Developing factors of production involved undertaking research activities, funding of agricultural, animal and fishery activities as well as support of stakeholders.

1- Continuing Research Activities

511- Under the Ministry of Research and Scientific Innovation (MINRESI), IRAD developed appropriate techniques in farming, disease management, production of day-old chicks, value chain improvement activities, conservation techniques and procedures, production of improved varieties of basic seeds and pre-germinated seeds, plant production, production of legumes in the 5 agro-ecological zones of Cameroon²¹⁶, traditional small ruminants production systems, reduction of health risks, etc. These research activities were based on meat, eggs, palm oil, wheat, feed, rice, beans, cashew, soya, maize, brachiaria, sorghum, fish, cassava, small and big ruminants, tubers, legumes, vitro plants, improved seeds, plantains, fruit crops, etc. These achievements are detailed in editions of the monthly magazine, IRAD News²¹⁷.

512- Moreover, IRAD acquired new operational facilities in production basins including 2 Multipurpose Agricultural Research Stations in the Far North and South West Regions and 9 Research Stations in the Adamawa, Centre, Littoral, South West, South, North and Far North Regions.

2- Financing of Agricultural, Animal and Fishery Activities

513- In 2024, the total budget allocated to administrations in charge of leading State agricultural, livestock and fishing policy (that is MINADER and the Ministry of Livestock,

²¹⁴ About 1,145,038.17 Euros.

²¹⁵ About 1,068,702.29 Euros.

²¹⁶ Sudano-Sahelian zone, Guinean High Savannah zone, Western High Plateaux zone, Monomodal Rainforest zone and Bimodal Rainforest zone.

²¹⁷ <https://irad.cm/index.php/fr/publications/irad-news>

Fisheries and Animal Industries, MINEPIA) amounted to CFAF 171,692,891,000²¹⁸, that is an increase of over 31% compared to 2019 (CFAF 117,323,193,000²¹⁹).

514- Either with its own funds or with financial support from partners such as UNDP, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Islamic Development Bank (IDB), World Bank, African Development Bank (AfDB), or French Development Agency (AFD), the State of Cameroon, through the Ministry of the Economy, Planning and Regional Development, MINEPAT, MINADER and MINEPIA, continued or launched specific or cross-cutting programmes, plans and projects in the fields mentioned. A good number of these programmes, plans and projects generally focused on improving productivity. Some of them are listed in examples below and can be found online²²⁰.

515- Regarding projects in the agricultural sector, in 2022, the Benoue Valley Investment Development and Enhancement Project (VIVA-BENOUE) (for 7 years and with funding of CFAF 113,000,400,000²²¹, <https://vivabenoue.org/>) and the Logone Valley Investment Development and Enhancement Project (with funding of CFAF 117,570,000,000²²²), were launched and facilitated the provision of sustainable irrigation and drainage infrastructure and services for the production of rice in particular. Having a bigger farm, phase II of the Agricultural Sector Development Support Project (2020-2026, <https://padfa.net/>) helped increase revenue and resilience of family farms in the Far North, North, North West and West Regions.

516- At the national level, the Green Innovation Centres for the Agrifood Sector Project which scaled up in 2019 led to increase in revenue of small farmers, job creation and food supply owing to agricultural and agrifood innovations. Targeting cooperatives, producers, research institutes and others, the support project for the production of quality plant material provided them with crop seeds that meet the criteria of quality, purity and germination capacity.

517- Regarding the livestock sector, funded to the tune of CFAF 60,000,000,000²²³, the Livestock Development Project (PRODEL) provided support for improving productivity of systems such as pastoral production, short cycle animal rearing, village animal rearing of cattle (meat and milk), of small ruminants (sheep and goats), of pigs and poultry in the main production basins of Cameroon. On its part, the livestock trade and infrastructure development project received funding of USD 45,260,000 (CFAF 28,174,350,000,00)²²⁴ in 2019 and contributed to improving the livelihood of the people of the Adamawa, North and Far North Regions thanks to market access and good production practices, particularly with cattle and small ruminants.

²¹⁸ About 262,126,551.14 Euros.

²¹⁹ About 179,119,378.62 Euros.

²²⁰ <https://www.minader.cm/index.php/nos-institutions/projets-et-programmes/>
<https://minepia.cm/site/projets-et-programmes/projets/>
<https://minepat.gov.cm/fr/projets-et-programmes-economie/>.

²²¹ About 172,519,694.66 Euros.

²²² About 179,496,183.21 Euros.

²²³ About 91,603,053.83 Euros.

²²⁴ About 43,014,274,809.16 Euros.

518- As concerns cross-cutting sector programmes and plans, the agricultural and territorial development components (relating to the development of hydro-agricultural areas, the setting up of Agropoles and construction of water reservoirs) of the Three-Year Emergency Plan for the Acceleration of Economic Growth (PLANUT), continued to be implemented. The territorial development component recorded physical implementation rate of over 40%. After the Covid-19 pandemic, the post-Covid-19 Economic Recovery Support Programme for Cameroon strengthened competitiveness of the productive sectors including agriculture. Carried out since 2012, the economic regional planning programme for the promotion of small and medium-sized enterprises in the rural sector in Cameroon²²⁵ continued to support growth acceleration and job creation in the vegetable, animal, fisheries and forestry sectors.

519- Regarding specific programmes, the State maintained the execution of the Programme for the consolidation and sustainability of agro-pastoral counselling, which had funding of CFAF 62,300,000,000²²⁶ and was tasked with supporting producer organisations in executing their investment projects through advisory services and subsidies. In 2023, this Programme was beneficial to 3,000 rural families and increased their average revenue by 30%. The implementation of the Youth Agropastoral Entrepreneurship Promotion Programme (AEP-Youth), which seeks to support the development of profitable youth-led enterprises in promising agro-pastoral sectors continued. In March 2023, the AEP-Youth generated 10,000 jobs, raised awareness among 30,000 persons, financed over 2,600 young people, supported 3,800 youth and impacted 30 000 households.

520- Finally, the Support Project for the Strengthening of Agricultural Production in Cameroon (PARPAC), which has as main objective to increase the production of key agricultural crops (rice, maize, sorghum, millet, soya, Irish potato, palm oil, vegetable crops, tomato), facilitated access to agricultural inputs among others.

3- Support to Stakeholders of the Food Production Chain

521- Besides multifaceted support in equipment and infrastructure, special emphasis was laid on initial and continuous training of stakeholders of the food production chain. The number of learners in training institutions was significant.

Table 6: Number of Learners Trained in Training Institutions under the MINADER from 2019 to 2023

Region	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Adamawa	0	0	0	0	0

²²⁵Also known as Agropoles Programme, it aims to support and ensure coherence, in direct collaboration and perfect synergy, of actions undertaken by the Ministries together with relevant public and private institutions through the promotion of medium and large agro-sylvo-pastoral enterprises.

²²⁶ About 94,114,503.82 Euros.

Centre	239	126	220	93	171
East	73	120	113	150	116
Far North	208	267	297	277	280
Littoral	91	117	121	159	113
North	150	212	291	304	324
North West	225	284	276	255	280
West	107	142	146	146	121
South	307	482	434	736	499
South West	121	124	186	156	110
Total	1,521	1,874	2,084	2,276	2,014

Source: MINADER

522- From 2019 to 2023, regarding continuous training in the livestock and fisheries industry, under the supervision of MINEPIA and the institutions under its supervisory authority, the trainings concerned the following: 532 heads of zootechnical and veterinary centres on veterinary health inspection in slaughter houses, collection of samples, the role of the head of the zootechnical and veterinary centre, the monograph of a zootechnical and veterinary centre, management of a veterinary clinic, cattle fattening, ethics and deontology; 174 agropastoral farmers in the agriculture, livestock and fishing sectors, 52 inseminators; 60 poultry farmers from the North West on modern techniques for brooding day old chicks; several RLA and MINEPIA personnel on best practices for slaughtering and biosafety in poultry slaughterhouses, etc.

523- Moreover, MINEPIA issued authorisations, opinions, licences and other necessary documents for the practice of certain activities in the animal and fishery industries. For example, in 2022 and 2023, 39 authorisations to create aquaculture farms, 57 authorisations to create production, storage and sale of feed meant for feeding livestock and 20 technical clearances to import food and inputs meant for feeding livestock were issued, etc.

524- Through its Department of National Meteorology, the Ministry of Transport continued to provide technical support to stakeholders of the food production chain by freely providing an agrometeorological bulletin 3 times a month, valid for 10 days and available online²²⁷. This service was made available at a cost to users (just like the Cameroon Sugar Corporation and the Animal Production Development and Exploitation Company) who required a specific product for their field of activity in compliance with Decree No. 93/700/PM of 11 November 1993 to lay down the tariffs for meteorological information and works.

²²⁷ www.meteocamerou.gov.cm

B- Production Results

525- Measures taken by the State of Cameroon resulted in significant production as attested by the tables below on agricultural production in 2022 and production in the animal and fishery sector between 2019 and 2023.

Table N 7: Results of Agricultural Production in 2022

Crops	Volume in tons	Crops	Volume in tons
Cereals	3,506,554.79	Groundnut	646,544.94
Maize	2,076,558.27	Sesame	75,762.92
Rice	340,156.96	Soya	180,704.15
Millet and sorghum	1,089,839.56	Beans	324,450.44
Cowpea	214,619.23	Tubers	9,063,364.21
Bambara groundnut	27,452.60	cocoyam/colocasia	1,544,495.28
Cassava	6,111,887.11	Pineapple	268,874.82
Yam	575,294.68	Onion	385,895.03
Irish Potato	287,213.58	Tomato	1,041,983.49
Sweet potato	544,473.56	Okra	105,223.58
Vegetables and Fruits	...	Chilli	49,798.30
Watermelon	101,539.50	Cucumber	282,971.47
Ginger	82,309.38	Plantains	4,721,145.89
Banana	1,096,686.12		

Source: MINADER

Table 8: Results of Production in Tons in the Animal and Fishery Sector from 2019 to 2023

Crop or type of production	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Cattle	107,110	109,982	125,194	126,512	130,169
Sheep	18,197	17,287	20,397	25,115	25,649
Goat	25,081	26,082	27,783	33,268	38,564
Pork	42,832	42,459	44,105	46,031	49,435
Poultry	103,331	44,471	52,679	59,808	65,312
Total Meat	296,552	240,281	270,158	290,735	309,129

Milk (Cattle)	207,216	187,873	166,132	173,907	176,618

Eggs	81,158	93,871	104,846	107,377	123,103
Honey	7,205	6,932	6,976	7,844	7,971

Industrial fishing	14,178	10,832	12,293	8,224	12,229
Continental Fishing	45,933	27,204	23,613	25,568	25,775
Small-scale Sea Fishing	265,968	175,338	179,322	184,642	184,400
Aquaculture	9,078	6,817	8,192	14,929	19,157
Total	335,158	220,190	223,420	233,363	2411

Source: MINEPIA

§3: Accessibility and Acceptability of Foodstuff

526- In addition to general measures, guaranteeing the quality of foodstuff also involved ensuring its accessibility and acceptability.

A: General Measures

527- The objective was to structure foodstuff distribution channels by controlling supplies in general and consumer goods in particular as well as to control prices and fight against contraband.

1- Control of Supplies and Prices and the Fight against Contraband

528- Between 2020 and 2023, the Ministry of Commerce carried out 50,000 controls, seized tens of thousands of non-compliant food products (with over 111,800 in 2020 and 2021) and sanctioned thousands of businesses. Thus, in 2023, 19,263 tax payers were sanctioned, that is 81.37% of sanctions concerning price control, trade and competition, 10.95% relating to metrological controls and 7.68% relating to quality control of products and after sales services.

2- Control of Consumer Goods Supplies

529- With the purpose of sustainably ensuring availability of consumer goods supplies and especially at low cost, the Consumer Products Supplies Regulatory Authority was present on the field through periodic test markets, test/pilot stores, street markets and special text markets. From 2019 to 2023, supplies were recorded amounting to 40,049.044 tons, with transaction value of CFAF 7,289,318,000²²⁸ and 541 contracts. At the structural level, MIRAP constructed and commissioned 2 sample stores in Ebolowa and Ngoundere.

²²⁸ About 11,128,729.77 Euros.

B: Guaranteeing the Quality of Foodstuff

530- This guarantee covered the standardisation and certification of foodstuff as well as their food safety.

1- Standardisation and Certification of Foodstuff

531- In the food industry, between 2021 and 2024, the Standards and Quality Agency approved 1,879 Standards, issued 1,168 compliance certificates and carried out 5 training and awareness raising activities. Overall, it issued certificates for 1,804 local products, 23,337 compliance certificates for imported products, controlled 3,459 facilities, carried out 44 field missions, seized 5,498 products, carried out 38 investigations (with findings), identified 1,168 offences, received 24 reports and issued 3 alerts.

2- Food Safety

532- Cameroon worked to guarantee food safety through inspections, seizures, vaccine production, vaccination, etc. Thus in 2023, for about CFAF 6,500,000 FCFA²²⁹ the North West Livestock Development Fund acquired and distributed various veterinary medications and equipment at subsidised costs to animal breeders and farmers in the North West. In slaughterhouses and in the markets, 189,175 cattle, 47,436 small ruminants, 40,401 pigs, 1,099,120 poultry, 367 donkeys and 77 horses were inspected.

533- In the same year (2023), 100 tons of meat and offal were seized to protect consumers. Moreover, 21 authorisations to run private businesses were granted to veterinarians and 5 authorisations to open secondary offices were issued. Furthermore, over 100 tons of meat and offal were seized and destroyed across different slaughter houses to protect consumers. Regarding vaccines in particular, the National Veterinary Laboratory produced millions including 25,000,000 in 2019 and 7,000,000 in 2023.

Section 9: Water and Sanitation

534- As part of its commitments to sustainable development and the NDS30, the State continued to guarantee access to drinking water and sanitation.

§1: Access to Drinking Water

535- With the strengthening of the normative framework in the water sector by Decree No. 2024/176/PM of 26 February 2024 establishing the terms of management of water used for agricultural purposes and maintenance of hydraulic infrastructures in irrigated areas, the State continued to undertake actions to improve drinking water supply, both in urban and peri-urban areas as well as in rural areas.

A: Access to Drinking Water in Urban and Peri-Urban Areas

536- In order to satisfy demand for drinking water, several projects and programmes were set up. The Drinking Water Supply Project for the City of Yaoundé (PAEPYS), operational since

²²⁹ About 9,923.66 Euros.

20 August 2024, was designed to address water shortages in the capital city and its surroundings by providing 300,000 m³ of drinking water per day. This capacity makes it possible to address water shortage for inhabitants of Yaoundé, Batchenga, Obala and other surrounding localities, who were hitherto insufficiently supplied by the Akomnyada and Mefou treatment facilities.

537- With an overall budget of CFAF 399,000,000,000²³⁰, mainly financed by Eximbank China, PAEPYS includes infrastructure, particularly a water collection and treatment plant from the Sanaga River, as well as several pumping and storage stations, which became operational.

538- The Douala City Water Supply Project was underway. It aims to modernize and expand the city's capacity to meet the growing needs of its residents. The project aims to add 400,000 m³ per day to Douala's production capacity, to reach 703,400 m³/day upon completion of works in 2027. The estimated cost is about CFAF 125,000,000,000²³¹. In October 2023, the preliminary design studies were validated and the detailed design studies were ongoing while geotechnical studies continued under the technical assistance of the National Civil Engineering Laboratory.

539- In addition, emergency works on the project to extend the Akomnyada drinking water plant with a compact treatment unit of 55,000m³/d in terms of production, led to the construction and equipping of an autonomous water intake of 58,000m³/d, a raw water pumping station, a 55,000 m³/d treatment plant consisting of 10 ultrafiltration modules; the supply and installation of a raw water pipeline of suitable diameter with water hammer protection, piping the conduit of treated water into the existing 8,300 m³ tank. Regarding storage, the project led to the construction of 2 raw water tanks of 500 m³ and 2 treated water tanks of 500 m³ each. In terms of distribution, it led to an upgrade and reinforcement of the Nkoayos pumping station in Yaounde, to ensure the conduit of the additional 55,000 m³/d to various sites in the city of Yaounde.

540- Moreover, the Emergency Transitory Measures Project in Douala and Yaounde made significant progress with a 100% completion rate in 2023. For the city of Yaoundé, the extension and reinforcement of Akomnyada's production led to the supply and installation of compact units of 35,000m³/d, the supply and installation of the raw water pipeline and the treated water pipeline. As for the city of Douala, thanks to these works, 11 boreholes were constructed and equipped, 7 of which were operational, hence 30,480 m³/day, and the hydraulic connection of the boreholes to the existing network was established.

541- In addition, in semi-urban areas, the drinking water supply and sanitation project in a semi-urban environment of 18 secondary centres also recorded 100% completion of works in several localities in 2023, particularly in Mbanga with the installation of 7,935 ml of additional pipes, construction of 6 public taps and of 11 valve chambers as well as the rehabilitation of the existing reservoir. In Nkongsamba, this project facilitated the extension and reinforcement of additional production capacity of 800 m³/day, construction of a 500 m³ semi-underground

²³⁰ About 609,160,305.34 Euros.

²³¹ About 190,839,694.66 Euros.

reservoir and another of 250 m³, supply and installation of 10,876 ml of pipes, construction of 6 public taps, construction of an operating building, rehabilitation of the existing 2,400 m³/day treatment plant and rehabilitation of 25 public taps.

542- Works of Phase I of the 9 Cities Drinking Water Supply Project²³², which sought to expand and upgrade production stations in the cities concerned, were completed in 2021. These works resulted in additional daily production of about 38,000 m³ for Kribi, Bafoussam, Bamenda and Sangmelima. Phase II of this Project was launched on 28 August 2023 in Garoua-Boulaï, Lom- and-Djerem Division. This phase, which targets the cities of Garoua-Boulaï, Dschang, Garoua, Maroua and Yabassi, will significantly improve water supply in the cities concerned with a total additional production of 107,000 m³/day.

543- The project to rehabilitate, reinforce and extend drinking water supply systems (WSS) in 52 centres significantly advanced in some cities²³³. Indeed, phase I led to an increase in production capacity of 5,640 m³/day, installation of a 400 m³ reservoir, extension of its network by 58.11 km, construction of 10 public taps and establishment of 272 private connections.

544- As part of decentralisation, local authorities were given more powers to manage water access projects in their region. Indeed, Article 157 of Section 2 of the General Code of Regional and Local Authorities provides, among other things, that drinking water supply be amongst powers transferred to councils, which will allow for a more targeted approach adapted to realities on the ground.

545- Awareness campaigns were conducted to inform inhabitants about water conservation practices and the importance of reporting leaks to avoid waste. This was done, for example, through advertisements broadcast on television and radio stations during the celebration of International Water Day on March 22 every year, as was the case in 2024, with CAMWATER's advertisements on water management being played in a loop for several weeks on Cameroon Radio Television.

B: Access to Drinking Water in Rural Areas

546- Water supply points were constructed to serve rural populations. Hence, on 1 July 2021 a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Government of Cameroon and the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), relating to the project to supply drinking water in rural areas of 4 councils in Cameroon. These are the Matomb and Ebebda councils in the Centre Region, Massok in the Littoral and Koutaba in the West Region. In the Koutaba council for example, 6 deep wells were built to serve small villages in the council and for the bigger villages, 3 water supply systems, 2 of which are solar-powered, were built to pump clean water directly to households or public water points.

²³² Kribi, Bafoussam Bamenda, Sangmélima, Garoua-Boulai, Dschang, Yabassi, Maroua and Garoua.

²³³ These are Douala, Maroua, Bogo, Mbankomo and Jikijem Oku.

547- The National Participatory Development Programme (PNDP) supported several community-based projects to improve access to water in rural areas. This decentralised development programme enabled local communities to design and manage drinking water projects, thereby strengthening participatory management and infrastructure approval by rural populations. For example, between 2019 and 2022, 12 wells with human-powered pumps and 30 boreholes with human-powered pumps were built in the Edzendouan council located in the Mefou et Afamba Division in the Centre Region, and 42 wells with human-powered pumps, 5 wells with electric pumps, 87 boreholes with human-powered pumps were built in the Fotokol Council located in the Logone-and-Chari Division, in the Far North Region.

548- The use of technologies suitable for rural areas was encouraged to ensure continued access to drinking water. Boreholes equipped with solar pumps and simple water purification systems were adopted in several communities in the North, Far North and Adamawa Regions²³⁴, to ensure a steady and sustainable supply. These technologies, which are often less expensive to maintain and easier to manage, improved the resilience of water infrastructure to local constraints.

549- Awareness-raising campaigns were organised to encourage best practices in water conservation and hygiene, particularly in schools and rural community centres, with a focus on crucial topics such as handwashing, waterborne disease prevention, and waste management. These initiatives aimed at reducing the risk of water contamination and raise awareness among rural populations about the importance of hygiene in preventing waterborne diseases. For the second year, in 2019 for example, the ANI International association carried out the Drinking Water and Sanitation project in Cameroon. The aim of this project was, among other things, to raise awareness among children living in the neighbourhoods that benefited from the boreholes on the health risks related to water and sanitation, particularly in Sa'a as regards rural areas and in Yaounde as concerns urban areas.

§2: Liquid Sanitation

550- Cameroon implemented several actions to improve liquid sanitation, in order to reduce health and environmental risks in urban and rural areas. Thus, State actions mainly focused on the construction and rehabilitation of sanitation infrastructure and advocacy for improved toilets and latrines.

A: Construction and Rehabilitation of Sanitation Infrastructure

551- Cameroon invested in the construction of wastewater treatment plants and rehabilitation of existing facilities to reduce the pollution of waterways. In Yaounde, for example, efforts were made to build wastewater treatment systems that meet the growing needs of urban populations, as can be seen from the inauguration in 2021 of the first sewage sludge treatment plant²³⁵. It can treat up to 260 m³ of sludge per day, directly impacting 200,000 inhabitants.

²³⁴ These include the Pitoa council (Badjengo village) in the North Region, Nganha council (Vokotondou village) in the Adamawa Region and Mindif council (Matfai village) in the Far North Region.

²³⁵ This infrastructure was set up thanks to a partnership between the Yaounde City Council, the AIMF, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and the French Development Agency.

552- Wastewater drainage pipes were also installed or reinforced in several cities, including Yaounde and Douala, to improve the flow and treatment of domestic and industrial wastewater.

553- Furthermore, the Yaounde Sanitation Project (PADY) was one of the key initiatives to improve wastewater management in the capital city²³⁶. This project facilitated the construction of drainage and cleaning infrastructure and the development of retention basin infrastructure to prevent floods and reduce water pollution. This, for example, led to an increase in urban sanitation coverage in Yaoundé to 59% in 2020 compared to 17% in 2011.

554- PADY included the construction of settling tanks to reduce the risk of flooding in the rainy season and to ensure better wastewater treatment in areas sensitive to pollution and flooding in Yaounde.

555- The Douala Storm Drainage Project led to the development of 33 km of concrete canals and the opening of outlets.

B: Promoting the Use of Improved Toilets and Latrines

556- In rural and peri-urban areas, the State built improved latrines to encourage the population to use them and limit soil and groundwater contamination during the period under review. These latrines aim to reduce open defecation and improve community hygiene, thereby reducing the risk of waterborne diseases. For example, with support from partners such as UNICEF and the World Bank, the State built or rehabilitated several latrines, as was the case in the Far North Region, where more than 2,000 latrines were built in schools, markets and health centres.

557- Improved treatment technologies, such as dry toilets or phyto-purification systems (plant treatment), were also popularised, although their implementation remained limited to local or pilot initiatives due to lack of information and funding. The Yaoundé 1 Council, for example, adopted dry toilets using sawdust.

558- As concerns areas with limited water resources, Cameroon promoted ecological sanitation systems through pilot initiatives in some communities to test the viability of these systems. For example, in Lobo Council, a pilot project was implemented in 2019 which included the construction of latrines with a ventilated double pit, making it possible to recycle nutrients from human excreta into natural fertilizers for soil fertilization.

559- The Rural Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Project (PAEA-MRU) aims to improve access to drinking water and sanitation in 4 regions of Cameroon (North West, South West, West, and South). Similarly, with the construction of 60 drinking water supply systems, 60 boreholes, 80 water reservoirs and several pumping stations and public taps as well as 2,220 latrines in public places, this project advanced in these regions, thanks to joint efforts by the

²³⁶ PADY 2 facilitated the construction of 18 km of drainage canals in the city of Yaoundé.

State and financial partners, including the African Development Bank (AfDB). Indeed, at its 5th annual session held on 2 March 2023, the steering committee of the said project examined the state of implementation of its action plan and validated the budgeted work plan for the year 2023.

560- As of December 2024, data collection missions were completed and feasibility studies for the construction of drinking water supplies were revised for 82 localities; the Project document for the provision of financing for phase 2, more in accordance with the Islamic Development Bank (IDB), was developed and submitted to MINEPAT, which forwarded it to the IDB for validation and transmission to the Donor; and close-out activities for Phase 1 of the project were almost completed.

561- Considering actions carried out by the State, the rate of access to drinking water for households improved from 77% in 2018 to 80% in 2022. In 2023, 650,000 households were served by CAMWATER compared to 558,286 households in 2022.

562- The rate of access to sanitation also increased slightly, from 61% in 2018 to 66% in 2021²³⁷. A total of 10,673 latrines were constructed for 10,313 households during the period under review.

Section 10: Protection of the Family (Article 18)

563- As per the Constitution, “*the Nation shall protect and promote the family which is the natural foundation of human society*”. In view of protecting the family which is the natural unit and basis of society, the state took initiatives including providing economic support to families, promoting the legal status of couples, protecting children in the family as well as carrying out awareness raising and Educating on Marriage and Family Life.

§1: Economic Support to Families

564- The State, with the support of the World Bank, has since 2013 been executing the Social Safety Nets project, providing monetary support to individuals and families in situations of extreme poverty to protect them against negative shocks. The support took 2 forms: Ordinary cash transfers and emergency cash transfers. See § 501).

§2: Promoting the Legal Status of Couples

565- The State through MINPROFF continued to encourage the legalisation of unions in a bit to promote the stability of families, by organising ceremonies for collective marriages at various civil status registries nationwide. The number of collective marriages celebrated is as follows: 2019: 2507; 2020: 415; 2021: 1099; 2022: 1300 ; 2023: 2182 ; 2024 :1285.

²³⁷ See first national survey on *access* to energy (énace-1) household component of 8 January 2024.

§3- Awareness Raising and Education on Marriage and Family Life

566- Awareness raising and education on marriage and family life continued to be **organised**. The International Day of Families on 15 May which provides an opportunity to promote awareness of issues relating to families and to increase the knowledge of the social, economic and demographic processes affecting families, was celebrated in Cameroon yearly. In 2019, the *Minister of Women’s Empowerment and the Family called on families to reignite the values that promote and protect them, stressing on the importance of cultivating peace in families, reinstating dialogue and communication between its members.*

567- For the celebration of the 2023 edition of the Day, MINPROFF and its partners, particularly UN Women and UNFPA chose to discuss femicide in Cameroon in a context where the killing of women was increasing (including by their partners). It is in this backdrop that various stakeholders came together to call families and survivors to break the silence and apply for justice. They also called on relevant stakeholders to enforce the law and provide care for survivors.

568- Moreover, pre-marital, marital and family education sessions were organised by MINPROFF. In 2023, 24 sessions were organised reaching 1,467 persons.

§4 Positive Parenting Programme

569- On 3 August 2022, the programme on positive parenting developed by MINPROFF with technical and financial assistance of UNICEF was launched in Yaounde. The programme aims to equip parents with positive parenting skills so that they can better support their children's development from the early years into adolescence.

570- This programme reached approximately 1,703 people in the Littoral and West Regions in 2024.

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571- The State undertook several actions to guarantee social, economic and cultural rights, including the right to work, social security, education, health, culture, family protection, property, housing, food, and water and sanitation. These actions include the expansion of the school and university map, prevention of diseases, upward review of certain pensions, payment of social security benefits, and the organization of the 2021 Total Energies Africa Cup of Nations.

572- Challenges remained, including insufficient financial resources, soaring inflation and climate change, which were impacting access to water as well as agricultural and fisheries production.

CHAPTER 3: RIGHTS OF SPECIFIC CATEGORIES

573- The Government continued its efforts towards improving the protection of the rights of the child, persons with disabilities, Older Persons and persons deprived of their liberty. It strengthened the legal and institutional framework on the promotion and protection of these vulnerable groups and took several other measures to improve on their wellbeing.

Section 1: The Rights of the Child (Article 18(3) (4))

574- The legal framework for child protection was strengthened, access to citizenship, the right to participation and social protection were ensured, while the rights of those in contact with the justice system were guaranteed and measures taken to prevent children from joining armed groups.

§1: Legal Framework on Child Protection

575- 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 and provides for sanctions. The Law also specifies, the general and specific obligations of internet service providers. Administrative sanctions, and criminal procedure and penalties are provided by this Law on defaulters.

§2: Access to Citizenship

576- Government took measures for children in primary schools to obtain birth certificates to enable them register for official examinations. The Minister of Decentralisation and Local Development issued Order No. 000107/MF/MINDDEVEL/SG/DSL/SDSLB of 1 April 2022, launching the campaign for massive deliverance of birth certificates to children and other vulnerable persons. MINPROFF on 15 June 2023 made available the sum of CFAF 267 000 000²³⁸ for the issuance of declaratory judgments to enable the establishment of birth certificates to 26,691 children in 21 councils in 7 regions²³⁹.

577- Furthermore, under the Framework Agreement for collaboration between MINJUSTICE and Cameroon Education Reform Support Project (PAREC) signed on 5 April 2024 for the establishment of some 58,529 birth certificates to pupils in primary schools, some 48,232 declaratory judgments were delivered by the courts for onward establishment of birth certificates to these primary school pupils. MINPROFF at the end of December 2024, signed

²³⁸ About 407 ;633.59Euros.

²³⁹ 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.

contracts with 12 councils spread in 7 Regions²⁴⁰ to register 14,222 children on the Civil Status register. To this effect, the Ministry allocated the sum of CFAF142,000,000²⁴¹ to these councils.

578- In addition, the National Civil Status Registration Office (BUNEC) embarked on awareness raising and training of the population on registration of birth declaration and access to civil status documents and follow up of assizes (about 544 assizes) for the deliverance of declaratory judgments by the courts for onward establishments of birth certificates. It also involved Traditional and Religious Leaders in the awareness raising actions with a view to better mobilizing the public for birth registration. Equally, it built the capacity of 300 nurses from state-certified nursing schools on the new harmonised birth declaration forms in 2023.

§3: Participation in decision-making

579- The children's parliament was organised each year during the period under review. For instance, the 24th Session of Children Parliament was organised in June 2023, under the theme "*Digital literacy: an essential tool for information and the fight against violence and sexual abuse of children online*" during which children asked parliamentarians questions and thereafter made recommendations. The recommendations included, psychosocial support and reintegration of victims of violence and online sexual abuse, the systematic and compulsory registration of every child at birth, raising awareness of the 2 hotlines of the National Agency for Information and Communication Technologies, (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.

§4: Social Protection

580- The Ministry of Social Affairs (MINAS) provided social services to children. For instance, in 2023 alone, some 146,315 children were taken care of and supported. About 28,403 children (15,165 girls and 13,236 boys) who suffered from exploitation, violence or maltreatment among others were taken care of and given psychosocial support, some 5,639 children (775 girls and 4,864 boys) in detention were also given support by MINAS, educative talks (2,195).

581- Moreover awareness raising was carried out for some 38, 668 indigenous children (21,080 girls and 17,588 boys) on hygiene, citizenship and the importance of education. Internally displaced children (53,887, that is, 31,078 girls and 18,046 boys) as well as refugees children (10,320, that is, 5,557 girls and 4,864 boys) benefitted from operational services of MINAS.

§5: Protecting Children from Association with Non-State Armed Groups

582- Children who had been associated with non-state armed groups were admitted in the Centres of the National Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Committee

²⁴⁰ Adamawa, Centre, Far North, North, North West, South and South West

²⁴¹ About 216,793.89 Euros.

(NDDRC). It is estimated that about 1 098 minors were enrolled in NDDRC Centres in 2024 in the Far North, North West and South West Regions, as compared to 1,255 registered in 2022 (41 in Bamenda, 7 in Buea and 1,207 in Mora).

§6: Protection of Children in Contact with the Law

583- Capacity building workshops were held throughout the country for all stakeholders (Magistrates, Lawyers, court registrars, Police and Gendarme Officers, Penitentiary Staff and social workers) on the protection of children in the criminal justice system. Some 104 stakeholders were trained during these workshops in 2023 by MINJUSTICE in collaboration with UNICEF.

584- Besides, prosecution of perpetrators of crimes with children victims continued to be carried out by the courts. Trends from the courts in 2019 indicated that about 666 minors (253 boys and 413 girls), in 2020 about 1,457 minors (327 boys and 1,130 girls), in 2021 about 560 (223 boys and 337 girls), and in 2023 indicated that about 1,173 minors (897 girls and 276 boys) were victims.

585- Concerning children in conflict with the law, the incessant attacks from *Boko Haram* Group in the Far North Region and separatist fighting in the North West and South West Regions led to a number of children being victims or associated with these non-state armed groups. In 2019 for instance 234 children suspected to be associated with *Boko Haram* were reintegrated into their families and their communities while 305 children (149 girls and 196 boys) benefited from alternative care.

586- As regards separatist fighting in the North West and South West Regions, some children associated with the non-state armed group have been retrieved and placed in DDR Centres (See §582)

Section 2: The Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Article 18(4))

587- The legal, and strategic framework for the protection of persons with disabilities was strengthened and measures taken to protect their civil and political rights as well as their economic, social and cultural rights.

§1: Enhancing the Legal and Strategic Framework

588- Cameroon ratified the Marrakech Treaty through Decree No.2021/250 of 27 April 2021 which facilitates access to published works to visually impaired persons and persons with print disabilities.

589- Law No. 2010/002 of 13 April 2010 relating to the promotion and protection of the rights of persons with disabilities was further strengthened through the signing by the Prime Minister of Order No.40/PM of 19 May 2022 to lay down terms and conditions for granting age

exemption to persons with disabilities during competitive examinations and recruitment into the public service.

590- In addition, the National Strategy Document on Community-Based Rehabilitation for Inclusive Development in Cameroon 2024-2029” was presented by MINAS to the public on 27 November 2023. The said Document which strengthens the legal and institutional framework for the promotion and protection of persons with disabilities is a compass which makes it possible to harmonise on a national scale, the response of actors to plural needs of persons living with disabilities in terms of health, education, means of subsistence or even empowerment according to a coherent framework.

§2: Ensuring Social, Economic and Cultural Rights of Persons with Disabilities

591- Government policy with regard to education of persons with disabilities remained inclusive. Consequently, on 8 October 2024, in Yaounde the document on the National Policy of Inclusive Education (NPIE) was validated. The NPIE is Cameroon’s Government plan for the development of inclusive education in Cameroon from 2024 to 2028. The need for NPIE stems from inequalities and low enrolment and training of persons with disabilities in the sector.

592- The number of pupils with disabilities who sat for “*Certificat 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’Etudes 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.

§3: Guaranteeing Civil and Political Rights

593- To guarantee the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all walks of life, 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 regions²⁴² with the involvement of local actors, covers citizenship and political participation, and inclusive education. 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.

594- Concerning the management of public affairs, persons with disabilities held posts of responsibility. Persons with disabilities are included in the electoral process in Cameroon.

595- On 8 June 2023, MINAS and Platform Inclusive Society for Persons with Disabilities signed an Agreement for Collaboration, within the framework of the Project of the United

²⁴² (Adamawa, Centre, East, Far North, North, Littoral, South and West)

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. On 8 August 2023, MINAS equally signed a Partnership Agreement with “Effective Basic Service”, a organization CSO, which undertook to support Government in all its actions in favour of vulnerable groups including persons living with disabilities.

Section 3: The Rights of Older Persons

596- Measures continued to be taken to ensure that older persons enjoy their civil and political rights as well as economic, social and cultural rights. The legal framework for their protection was also enhanced.

§1: Enhancing the Legal Framework on the Rights of Older Persons

597- Cameroon deposited instruments of ratification of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Older Persons in Africa on 8 September 2023. The legal framework on the promotion and protection of older persons was strengthened through Decree No. 2020/376 of 8 July 2020 to fix the coefficient for upward revision of certain-old age and incapacity pensions as well as death benefits granted by the National Social Insurance Fund.

§2: Social, Economic and Cultural Rights of Older Persons

598- 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, 417 000,000²⁴³. The implementation of the said Document enabled the realisation of 21 activities on basic social services needed by older persons amounting to CFA 588,000,000²⁴⁴ including up umbrella associations or voluntary networks to fight ageism, access to loans, income-generating activities, and markets as well as supporting older persons to up umbrella associations or voluntary networks to fight ageism.

599- As regards health, measures were taken to treat older persons as well as giving out information on healthy aging. Thus, in 2022 for example, 2,308 campaigns on healthy and active aging were carried out and 18,554 older persons were sensitised. The International Day of Older Persons was celebrated yearly, during which the occasion Government and its partners offered free medical consultations to older persons, raised awareness on certain pathologies on aging and training on fabrication of soap among others.

²⁴³ About 2,163;358.98Euros.

²⁴⁴ About 897,709.92Euros

600- In addition during the second quarter of 2022, MINAS launched, in the Littoral and North West Regions, awareness –raising campaigns of families on the necessity to take care of the older persons and some 6,777 new families were supported in the care of older persons.

§3: Civil and Political Rights of Older Persons

601- Awareness campaigns were carried out to provide information on and to older persons. Thus, in 2022, MINAS embarked on a nationwide awareness raising campaign on the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Older Persons in Africa. During the said campaign, staff of MINAS, leaders and promoters of associations for older persons sensitised older persons on the Protocol as well as collected the concerns and expectations of older persons and other actors in the field with the aim of improving on the care of older persons.

602- Also, World Elder Abuse Awareness Day celebrated every 15 June was an opportunity among others to provide care for older persons, call on different stakeholders to consider older persons and raise awareness on the abuses inflicted on older persons.

603- Equally, Cameroon presented the plight of older persons at the international level such as during the 13th Session of UN Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG)²⁴⁵ on ageing held from 4 to 6 April 2023 in New York, Cameroon presented an advocacy document on older persons.

Section 4: Rights of Persons Deprived of Liberty

604- The State continued to implement its programme to improve prison policy²⁴⁶. To this end, measures were taken to improve detention conditions and combat prison overcrowding.

§1: Measures to Combat Prison Overcrowding

605- The capacity of functional prisons²⁴⁷ increased from 19,155 for a population of 30,606 detainees as at 31 December 2019 to 20,955 places as at 8 December 2024 for a prison population of 37,150 detainees, thus an occupancy rate of 159% in 2019 compared to 177.28% in 2024.

606- In order to combat this overcrowding, the State proceeded, among other things, to improve infrastructure, including making operational the Douala Ngoma Central Prison see §78). Moreover, thanks to the special financing of CFAF 701,484,550²⁴⁸ granted in 2023 by

²⁴⁵OEWG’s aim is to discuss concrete ways to strengthen the protection of the Human Rights of older persons.

²⁴⁶ The improvement of prison policy is one of the programmes under MINJUSTICE’s strategic performance framework, which sets out the public policy objectives whose implementation is the responsibility of this Ministry.

²⁴⁷ As a result of the crises in the North West and South West Regions), Fundong main prison, and Bavenga and Bali secondary prisons were not functional, while in the Far North Region, due to the activities of *Boko Haram*, the Meri main prison was converted into a centre for the disarmament and reintegration of repentant *Boko Haram* fighters, thus reducing the number of functional prisons from 81 in 2019 to 76 in 2024.

²⁴⁸ About 1,070,968.79Euros.

the Presidency of the Republic, the following works were carried out: construction of a single-storey building at the Douala Central Prison, and extension of the Poli Main Prison. In addition, 6 prisons²⁴⁹ and infirmaries in several prisons²⁵⁰ were repaired or extended.

607- In 2019, a special budget was allocated by the Presidency of the Republic for the rehabilitation, extension and equipping of prisons. This budget of CFAF 2,166,049,169²⁵¹ was added to the CFAF 55,081,575²⁵² disbursed for urgent repair and rehabilitation works. Thus, a total of 22 prisons out of the 76 functional prisons were rehabilitated²⁵³.

608- One of the most notable measures taken by the State was the regular decongestion of overcrowded prisons to less populated ones. For example, in the prisons in the West Region, approximately 1,110 inmates were transferred to other prisons between 2019 and 2024. About 500 inmates from prisons in the Littoral Region were transferred in 2023 to Douala-Ngoma Central Prison.

609- With a view to decongesting prisons, Decree No. 2020/193 of 15 April 2020 to commute and remit sentences was signed. As a result, 10,181 prisoners out of 27,500 benefited from remission of sentences, including 6,942 who were released, making 25.24% of the prison population in 2020.

610- Moreover, during the Annual Meeting of Heads of Courts of Appeal and Regional Delegates of Penitentiary Administration, organised on 24 and 25 October 2024 by MINJUSTICE, discussions focused on issues such as remand in custody and its peculiarities.

§2: Improvement of Detention Conditions

611- The State undertook various actions to improve the living conditions of detainees.

612- With regard to food, the budget allocated increased from CFAF 4,470,000,000²⁵⁴ to CFAF 5,265,000,000²⁵⁵ as shown in the table below. The daily ration per detainee, which was CFAF 371²⁵⁶ in 2019, increased to CFAF 412²⁵⁷ in 2023 and 2024.

²⁴⁹ The construction of a 12-cell block with a capacity of 350 beds at the Maroua Central Prison, the construction of the Bengbis Secondary Prison with a capacity of 120 beds, the construction of a building for patients at Kousseri main prison and the construction of women's sections at Tibati and Tignère main prisons in 2024 taking into consideration persons with disabilities.

²⁵⁰ Including the Bangangté and Nkongsamba main prisons and Djoum secondary prison.

²⁵¹ About 3,306,945.30Euros.

²⁵² About 84,094.01Euros.

²⁵³ These included, among others, the repair of the roof of the women's section of the Monatélé main prison, the extension of the fence of the Djoum secondary prison, repair of the fence of the Tcholliré II main prison, equipping of the infirmary of the Nkongsamba main prison, rehabilitation of the kitchen and the roof of the annex block of the Bafoussam Central Prison, etc.

²⁵⁴ About 6,824,427.48Euros.

²⁵⁵ About 8,038,167.94 Euros.

²⁵⁶ About 0.57Euros.

²⁵⁷ About 0.63Euros.

Table 1: Statistics on the amounts allocated for food coverage for detainees from 2019-2024

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
AMOUNT ALLOCATED	4,470,000,000	5,015,891,000	5,015,000,000	5,015,000,000	5,265,000,000	4,650,000,000

Source: MINJUSTICE/DAPEN

613- Health coverage increased from CFAF 1,050,000,000²⁵⁸ in 2019 to CFAF 1 100 000 000 ²⁵⁹ in 2024, as shown in the table below.

Table 2: Statistics on various amounts allocated for health coverage of detainees from 2019-2024.

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
AMOUNT ALLOCATED	1,050,000,000	1,015,000,000	1,050,000,000	1,050,000,000	1,150,000,000	1 100 000 000

Source: MINJUSTICE/DAPEN

614- In 2019, out of a total of 65,901 routine consultations, 1,011 cases were referred for outpatient consultations and resulted in 256 cases of outpatient hospitalisations as against 997 cases of outpatient consultations in 2020 which resulted in 1,352 cases of outpatient hospitalisations, 1,251 in 2021 which resulted in 482 cases of outpatient hospitalisations, 2,280 cases of outpatient consultations in 2022 which resulted in 522 cases of outpatient hospitalisations 3,286 cases of outpatient consultations in 2023 which resulted in 925 cases of outpatient hospitalisations and 8,255 cases of outpatient consultations in 2024 which resulted in 1,474 cases of outpatient hospitalisations.

615- With the aim of preventing diseases in prison, 21,068 people, including detainees, personnel and their families, were vaccinated between 2019 and 2024 against hepatitis B, cholera, yellow fever, meningitis, tetanus, and others.

616- In addition, the outbreak of Covid-19 led to the adoption by the State of appropriate practical measures to limit its spread in the prisons.

²⁵⁸ About 1,603,053.43 Euros.

²⁵⁹ About 1 679 389,31 euros

617- One of the measures taken was to provide the 10 central prisons with sufficient medicines to treat sick detainees and personnel, and provide health equipment²⁶⁰. Logistically, the Yaounde Penitentiary Health Centre was approved by MINSANTE as a Covid-19 screening and vaccination centre.

618- Causes of death included malaria, HIV and tuberculosis. The death rate of detainees increased from 0.38% in 2019 to 0.99% in 2024.

619- Concerning water supply, prisons were supplied with running drinking water or water from boreholes. Hence, to guarantee steady water supply, water tanks and boreholes were built in 3 prisons²⁶¹ in 2019 and 5 other boreholes in 2020 in 5 prisons²⁶².

620- Regarding human resources management, the capacities of penitentiary personnel were strengthened to improve care given to detainees. As such, about 578 personnel underwent in-service training at the National School of Penitentiary Administration (ENAP) in Buea. They also took part in other trainings concerning, health (3 August 2021 in Yaounde) and Human Rights on topics such as deprivation of liberty, protection of children in contact with the law,²⁶³ and HIV in relation to Human Rights (from 11 September to 13 October 2023 in the 10 Regions of Cameroon)²⁶⁴. From 10 to 25 June 2024, 30 prison staff from the 10 regions of Cameroon participated in 3 capacity building workshops on improving the quality of care given to juvenile prisoners.

621- In addition, the number of prison staff increased from 4,480 in 2019 to 4,221 in 2024. The staff-to-inmate ratio went from 1:8 in 2019 to 1:9 in 2024.

622- The number of health personnel decreased from 254 in 2019 to 251 in 2024. The ratios were 1 doctor/1,355 detainees, 1 nurse/495 detainees, 1 nursing assistant/258 detainees, 1 laboratory technician/944 detainees from 2019 to 2024.

§3: Preparation for the Social Reintegration of Detainees

623- In a bid to prepare for their social reintegration, detainees benefited from various training courses either in small trades or through continuation of their school curriculum.

²⁶⁰ Composed of screening kits, protective masks, hydro-alcoholic gels, thermo-flashes, sprayers of disinfecting substances for the premises and personal protective equipment for medical staff (overalls, gloves, boots, goggles, etc.).

²⁶¹ The Mbanga, Monatélé, Batouri Main Prisons

²⁶² Bafoussam, Bertoua, Maroua, Ngaoundéré, Edéa prisons had boreholes, which replaced CAMWATER facilities

²⁶³ From 10 to 25 June 2024, in the 10 regions of Cameroon, from 30 to 31 July 2024 in Yaoundé, from 2 to 3 August 2023 in Yaounde and from 24 to 25 August 2023 in Bafoussam, from 21 to 23 September 2022 in Yaoundé, from 30 November to 2 December 2022 in Maroua and from 12 to 14 December 2022 in Garoua.

²⁶⁴ With funding from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, through CARE Cameroon and GIZ from 11 September to 30 November 2023 in the 10 Regions of Cameroon.

624- As concerns vocational training, about 1,455 detainees were trained from 2019 to 30 September 2024 in fields such as sewing, hairdressing, carpentry, information technology, agriculture. In terms of education, out of about 1,921 detainees in school, 179 succeeded in various official examinations between 2019 and 2024.

625- Under the supervision of penitentiary staff, the most recurrent types of activities were sports (football, handball, basketball, table tennis), cultural dances, fashion parades, theatre and board games. Freedom of worship was guaranteed, allowing for several religions to be practiced in prison. With regard to social assistance, several prisons had social welfare services, run by social workers.

CHAPTER 4: PEOPLES' RIGHTS

626- Cameroon is a cosmopolitan and sociologically as well as culturally diverse country. Its desire to guarantee every one's sense of belonging to a people remained a constant priority. In addition to the information in the previous report, which is still very relevant, measures were taken to strengthen the recognition of the rights of Cameroonians as a people and the achievements of living together, despite the persistence of irredentist crises. State actions thus consisted in consolidating the peoples' right to equality; right to self-determination, right to freely dispose of natural resources, right to development and right to peace and security.

Section 1: Peoples' Right to Equality (Article 19)

627- The quest for balance in managing the sociological and linguistic peculiarities of the Cameroonian society was evidenced by an inclusive approach in the search for solutions to the social crisis in the North West and South West Regions. Hence, the State continued to engage in dialogue in view of a definitive return to peace in these regions. In addition to releasing hundreds of separatists, a Major National Dialogue was organised from 30 September to 4 October 2019 to discuss the aspirations of the people. In prelude to this Major National Dialogue, 18 official dialogues were organised by the State in Buea, Bamenda and Yaounde. Concerning the implementation of the recommendations from the Major National Dialogue, mention can be made of the continuing special recruitment of English-speaking pupil Magistrates and student Court Registrars for the North West and South West Courts of Appeal, where the first batches took service in 2020, creation and operationalisation of the Common Law Division of the Supreme Court, continuous recruitment of teachers in the English-speaking subsystem of education and granting a special status to the aforementioned 2 Regions. These solutions helped substantially reduce the atrocities committed by armed groups in these regions.

628- On its part, the National Commission for the Promotion of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism continued combating hate speech and violent extremism through awareness-raising including through poster campaigns. For example, on 1 June 2023 in Yaoundé, it signed a Memorandum of Understanding with 14 CSOs to combat this scourge. It also went out to the field to ensure the effectiveness of the equal status for the 2 official languages, French and English, in the provision of public services, in educational institutions, diplomatic representations and training centres for defence and security forces. During the last quarter of

2023, the Commission visited the diplomatic missions in Abuja, Berlin, Brussels, London, Paris, Pretoria and Washington DC. In addition, it evaluated the practice of bilingualism in 9 State universities, 15 regional hospitals and 8 DSF training centres.

629- Moreover, the normative framework for repressing hate speech was strengthened by criminalising contempt of tribe or ethnic group by Law No. 19/020 of 24 December 2019 to amend and supplement some provisions of Law No. 2016/7 of 24 July 2016 relating to the Penal Code.

Section 2: Peoples' Right to Self-Determination (Article 20)

630- This right, which is rooted in the challenges arising from the management of the colonial legacy, in particular administration by the Anglo-French condominium, was fully expressed during the socio-political crisis in the North West and South West Regions. Taking into account cultural specificities and strong demand for greater participation in the management of affairs, the Government's policy was geared towards reviewing the institutional network. Consequently, decentralisation accelerated following the adoption of Law No. 2019/24 of 24 December, 2019 on the General Code of RLAs and the effective setting up of regional councils. This instrument is innovative in that it grants special status to the North West and South West Regions, rehabilitating the *House of Chiefs* and creating the *Public Independent Conciliator*. These two institutions helped strengthen trust in the relations between the administration and the population through an inclusive approach and consideration of the socio-cultural specificities of the regions. The result is a gradual normalisation of the social climate.

631- Furthermore, the strengthening of the normative framework was also characterised by the validation, on 25 January 2023 in Yaounde, of the compendium of accounting standards specific to RLAs, during a session of the Public Accounts Standardisation Committee. The transfer of powers, particularly aspects on finance and the management of local human resources, resulted in the signing of certain instruments²⁶⁵.

Section 3: Right to Freely Dispose of Natural Resources (Article 21)

²⁶⁵ 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 Instruction No. 7/IC/MINFI/MINDDEVEL of 31 January 2023 on the preparation, drafting, execution and control of the budget of RLAs; Decree No. 2023/4186/PM of 24 July 2023 to lay down the terms and conditions for collecting, centralising, distributing and repaying the proceeds of the special excise duty intended to finance the removal and treatment of waste by the RLAs; Joint Instruction No. 929/IC/MINFI/MINDDEVEL of 14 September 2023 relating to the keeping of the General Accounts of RLAs; Decree No. 2023/422 of 19 September 2023 to define the duties of secretaries-general of RLAs; 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 RLAs; Order No. 147/A/MINDDEVEL of 19 July 2023 to lay down the terms and conditions for the creation, organisation and functioning of neighbourhood or village committees in the context of citizen participation in council action.

632- The Cameroon Mining Code of 2019 was revised and updated by Law No. 2023/14 of 19 December 2023. This instrument aims to improve the attractiveness, competitiveness and financial profitability of the sector, in order to contribute more to the country's GDP. Among innovations, there are the monopoly granted to SONAMINES in the purchase and marketing of gold and diamond, as well as clarification of the legal regime of small-scale mining.

633- The terms and conditions for issuing mining titles, permits and authorisations, as well as the terms and conditions for conducting mining operations were respectively addressed in Decree No. 2024/5061/PM of 18 November 2024 and Decree No. 2024/5062/PM of 18 November 2024., these 2 decrees signed by the Prime Minister clarify the relations between mining operators and the population, as well as the conditions for conducting artisanal mining.

634- Oil exploitation was regulated via the adoption of Law No. 2019/8 of 25 April 2019 to institute the Petroleum Code. Moreover Decree No. 2023/232 of 4 May 2023 to lay conditions for implementing Law No. 2019/8 of 25 April 2019 to institute the Petroleum Code was signed. Clarifications resulting from the combined reading of these instruments revolve around modernisation, sustainable economic and energy development as well as strengthening the attractiveness of the sector. Indeed, the regime of oil titles was specified, compliance with environmental standards imposed, incentive measures enacted and the promotion of oil operations boosted.

635- In addition, Law No. 2024/8 of 24 July 2024 to lay down forestry and wildlife regulations was adopted. It aims to strengthen the sustainable management of forest and wildlife resources by emphasising the conservation and sustainable use of these resources. It also sets up a system for the protection of ecosystems and animal species while guaranteeing the right of use by local the people. Other developments are made below in the specific context of the right to a healthy environment.

Section 4: Right to Development (Article 22)

636- In addition to the specific developments in this Report relating to the guarantee of economic, social and cultural rights as well as the fight against poverty and efforts to improve the living conditions of the people continued in the context of the implementation of the NDS30, one of its pillars being the increase of income through decent jobs, reduction of poverty and inequality, and achievement of Sustainable Development Goals. Thus, measure were taken to fight against extreme poverty, to promote employability, guarantee availability and accessibility of food, and support for economic operators.

§1: Fight against Extreme Poverty

637- For developments relating to the fight against extreme poverty, see §496 et seq and 865 et seq.

§2: Continuous Promotion of Employability

638- As part of continuously promoting employability, actions towards increasing the number of job vacancies continued. In this vein, the Grassroots Poverty Reduction Subprogram continued its activities through the implementation of the Economic Resilience Support Project. As a result, 360 youths and women were trained in setting up and managing micro-businesses, 275 youths and women were made self-employed through donations of equipment for the implementation of 62 projects, and 3 local plans for the professional integration of youth (PCIPJ) were developed in Doumé, Ngan-Ha and Garoua Bouläi.

639- Furthermore, 6 value chains were strengthened, namely: cassava production and processing in Garoua Bouläi, Doumé and Dir; beans production in Ngan-Ha; storage and preservation of onions in Pitoa; processing and packaging of paddy rice in Touloum and Kousseri; storage and conservation of cowpeas in Moulvoudaye and transformation of groundnuts into oil in Mokolo.

§3: Guaranteeing Availability of and Accessibility to Food

640- For developments on availability and accessibility of food, see §496 et seq and 865et seq.

§4: Support for Economic Operators

641-In accordance with the Loan Agreement signed on 21August 2022, the operation to support the Cameroonian private sector affected by ‘Covid-19’ “OSSP-CMR” Project aims to strengthen the resilience of the Cameroonian private sector, particularly Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), dealing with the negative consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic and other external shocks, and contribute to revamping economic growth. This project was financed through a USD 18,900,000 (CFAF1,192,374,105.3²⁶⁶) loan obtained from the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA), that is about CFAF 12,300,000,000²⁶⁷. Cameroon's consideration amounted to USD 1,050,000 (FCFA67,039,679.80)²⁶⁸ and UNDP contribution also amounted to USD 1,050,000. As a result, BADEA designated UNDP as the Project Trust Agency. The project will be implemented over a period of 3 years, which may be renewable.

642-To this end, from 6 to 8 November 2023, a capacity building workshop for the staff of the Project Management Unit on UNDP procedures and the drafting of the administrative, accounting and financial procedures manual was held in the city of Douala for the effective start of the Project.

Section 5: Right to Peace and Security (Article 23)

643-Despite various security constraints, including sporadic attacks by the *Boko Haram* terrorist group in the Far North, incursions by armed groups from the Central African Republic,

²⁶⁶ About 1,820,418.48Euros.

²⁶⁷ About 18,778, 625.95Euros.

²⁶⁸ About 102,350.66Euros.

the crisis in the North West and South West Regions and inter-community conflicts all continued. The guarantee of the right to peace and security hinged on a multisectoral option combining both internal solutions and the involvement of international partners.

§1: Safeguarding Peace and Territorial Integrity: A Resilient and Multidimensional Approach

644-The multidimensional approach adopted by Cameroon to guarantee peace and security within the territory and to meet the obligation to protect its people resulted in the use of military and socio-economic means, including civil-military actions, disarmament and reintegration, and reconstruction of affected areas. The legal framework was thus strengthened to ensure operational redeployment that takes into account the evolving nature of the threat.

A: Strengthening the Normative Framework

645-Law No. 2022/017 of 27 December 2022 relating to the suppression of piracy, terrorism and offences against the safety of maritime navigation and platforms was adopted²⁶⁹.

646-With a view to curbing terrorist financing networks, an institutional framework was established by Decree No. 2023/464 of 30 October 2023 to lay down the establishment, organisation and functioning of the Coordination Committee on National Policies against Money Laundering, Terrorist Financing and Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction. Placed under the authority of the Minister of Finance, this committee is responsible for developing and coordinating policies and activities aimed at combating these scourges in the Cameroonian context plagued by asymmetric threats.

647-This regulatory framework should be complemented by the activities of strategic consultation frameworks for implementation related to the fight against the proliferation of arms. This includes, the Interministerial Committee for the implementation of the Kinshasa Convention, the Inter-ministerial Committee for the Implementation of Chemical Weapons Convention, the Interministerial Committee for the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540²⁷⁰ and the Interministerial Consultation Platform in charge of developing the National System for the International Transfer of Arms. These meetings made it possible to assess the level of implementation of these international conventions and to identify future challenges such as the fight against the manufacture and use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) or their possession by persons other than the State of fissile or chemical materials.

B: Operational Dimension for Ensuring Peace and Security

²⁶⁹ This Law punishes offences against the safety of maritime navigation, the safety of platforms, terrorist acts on board ships and platforms, illegal transport of minor children, pollution of bodies of water and inland waterways, unauthorised emissions and financing of all these offences.

²⁷⁰ Relating to the ban on providing support to non-State stakeholders in the development, supply, transfer or use of nuclear, chemical or biological weapons or their means of delivery, in particular for terrorist purposes.

648-Regular evaluation meetings of the army high command, in particular MINDEF and the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces in regions plagued by security crises, made it possible to readjust the security system in the fight against *Boko Haram* and armed groups in the North West and South West Regions. The purpose of these meetings was to assess the security situation, reassure and comfort the populations who are victims of criminal actions and prescribe appropriate measures to restore security and order in these different regions. The Minister of Defence gave instructions for special security actions to track down terrorists in the Mandara Mountain area and deployed special forces to the common border area with the Central African Republic and Chad, to curb kidnappings and cattle theft. Security measures were also reviewed in the North West and South West Regions where the threat moved from armed confrontations to the more frequent use of IEDs.

649-In a bid to respond to the threat of IEDs²⁷¹, the capacities of the DSF were strengthened. For example, on 21 June 2023, in Yaounde, 260 deminers received their certificates concluding 4 weeks of training in the coordination, transport, delivery and destruction of explosives as well as in security measures.

650-As part of his prerogatives to control the circulation of weapons, the Minister of Territorial Administration signed 8 decisions in 2023 to open shops selling weapons and ammunition, 102 decisions to buy locally, 208 acquisition authorisations and 116 permits to carry firearms.

C: Civil-Military Actions

651-Measures were implemented to strengthen the Army/Nation Pillar. Thus, the Military Engineering Service carried out a number of public works such as the rehabilitation of the *Institut Camerounais de l'Enfance* of Betamba in February 2022; Phase I of the maintenance of some roads in Yaounde in late March 2022; renovation of 2 administrative blocks of the Higher Teacher Training College (HTTC) of Yaounde; and the construction of the base of the Cameroon National Shippers Council at Ngoulentang, Centre Region in October 2022.

652-For its part, Military Health participated in the execution of cross cutting programmes implemented by MINSANTE, such as the Expanded Immunization Programme, HIV/AIDS control, malaria control and various other programmes. From 14 to 28 March 2022, the Second Region Military Hospital provided free treatment to more than 62 patients with the Noma or “cleft lip” pathology. At the end of January 2023, 1,600 people took part in the free screening and vision control campaign organised by the BIR in the Far North Region.

653-On 3 March 2023, a food distribution campaign was organised in Kwakwa, Nake, Bole, Mbonge and Ekondo-Titi. On 20 December 2023, the Multinational Joint Task Force returned to the State rehabilitated classrooms in the public schools of Mada and Homeka.

D: Continuing the Reconstruction of Crises Regions

²⁷¹ There were 265 IED attacks in the North West Region and 32 in the South West Region.

654-The implementation of the ongoing reconstruction plan and programme continued.

1) The Presidential Plan for the Reconstruction and Development of the North West and South West Regions

655-During its 4th session, held in Yaounde on 8 July 2022, the Steering Committee of the Presidential Plan for the Reconstruction of the North West and South West Regions took stock of projects already carried out. As a result, of the FCFA²⁷² 154,000,000,000 expected, FCFA²⁷³ 11,000,000,000 had already been mobilised. Thus, 19 water points for more than 170,000 people, 16 health centres for 5,000 patients and 22 schools for 7,000 learners, were rehabilitated. In addition, 4 bridges were reconstructed.

656-Furthermore, 800 personal documents were reconstituted and 5 community centres were re-established for more than 120,000 beneficiaries, 60 mediators were trained and 12 festivals and various cultural events were funded. The plan also supported start-ups financially, as well as 47 agricultural cooperatives and 2,403 farmers through the provision of equipment, 40 greenhouses and 53 stores.

657-The search for financing for the said plan was concretised with the signing of the financing agreement for the project to support the said reconstruction²⁷⁴ on 10 May 2023 in Jeddah. The project²⁷⁵, supported by the Islamic Development Bank to the tune of FCFA²⁷⁶ 21,115,000,000, was launched on 18 December 2023 in Yaounde.

658-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, this association committed to pay the sum of CFAF²⁷⁷ 250,000,000 to the UNDP as support for the economic recovery of the North West and South West Regions. For more information on this Plan, see §246, 655, 896, 929, 949 and 972.

2) The Special Programme for the Reconstruction and Development of the Far North Region

²⁷² About 235,114,503.82 Euros.

²⁷³ About 16,793,893.13 Euros.

²⁷⁴ The agreement was signed as a result of Decree No. 2023/330 of 6 February 2023 to authorize the Minister of Economy, Planning and Regional Development to sign with the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) a loan agreement for EUR 32.250 million, or approximately CFAF 21.115 billion, for the financing of the Presidential Plan for the Reconstruction and Development of the North West and South West Regions (PPRD).

²⁷⁵ The said agreement was ratified by Decree No. 2023/330 of 4 August to ratify the Loan Agreement for an amount of EUR

32.250 million, 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.

²⁷⁶ About 32,236, 641.22 Euros

²⁷⁷ About 381,679.39Euros

659- The Special Programme for the Reconstruction of the Far North Region was adopted on 26 September 2021. It is based on 4 main thrusts, intended to repair the damage caused by the attacks of the *Boko Haram* group and the floods which occurred in the said region, as such: reconstruction, estimated at FCFA 136,000,000,000²⁷⁸, infrastructure development estimated at CFAF 1,587,000,000,000²⁷⁹, support for socio-economic activities and adaptation to climate change estimated at CFAF 87,000,000,000²⁸⁰, and governance, making a total of CFAF 1,810,000,000,000²⁸¹. Pursuant to Prime Ministerial Order No. 108/CAB/PM of 4 November 2022, the Coordinator of this Programme and their deputy were appointed.

660- In addition, during the *Far North Business Week* launched on 14 November 2022, the external and internal elites of this Region brainstormed on the economic development of the Region, affected by insecurity and natural disasters.

661- On 20 November 2023, the Programme received a financial contribution of CFAF 140,000,000,000²⁸² from the World Bank through the signing of an agreement with MINEPAT to finance the Project to Improve Connectivity and Inclusion along the Mora-Dabanga-Kousseri road.

662- Contracts were also awarded for the construction and equipping of 5 primary schools and 5 health centres, rehabilitation and equipping of the Mada Hospital and the construction of drinking water supply at the university campus of Sekande (Maroua). For more information on this Plan, see §246, 655, 896, 929, 949 and 972.

E: Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration of Ex-Fighters and Ex-Associates

663- The National Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Committee (NDDRC) led the process of reintegrating ex-fighters. Thus, 3 livestock projects for young people were financed in the national DDR centres (CFAF 23,000,000²⁸³ each for the Far North and North West centres and CFAF 21,000,000²⁸⁴ for the South West centre). A selection was made to finance the installation in a cluster of 21 young people from the Buea Centre to the tune of CFAF 63,504,511²⁸⁵, as well as CFAF 77,356,000²⁸⁶ for 23 young people from the Bamenda centre.

664- The number ex-fighters in Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) centres was as follows as of 31 December 2024.

²⁷⁸ About 207,633,587.79 Euros

²⁷⁹ About 2,422,900,663.36 Euros

²⁸⁰ About 132,824,427.48 Euros

²⁸¹ About 2,763,358,778.62 Euros

²⁸² About 213,740,458.01Euros.

²⁸³ About 35,114.50 Euros.

²⁸⁴ About32,061.07 Euros.

²⁸⁵ About96,953.45 Euros.

²⁸⁶ About118,100.76 Euros.

Table 1: Number of ex-fighters in DDR centres as of 31 December 2024

DDR Centre	Men	Women	Children	Total
Buea (South West)	52	29	24	605
Bamenda (North West)	349	108	71	528
Mora (Far North)	643	651	1003	2297
Total	1544	788	1098	3430

Source: NDDRC

665- Cameroonian ex-fighters continued their deradicalisation programme and their training for reintegration into social life. Moreover, a new selection system was implemented in collaboration with all parties. From now on, former foreign fighters of *Boko Haram* are guided and sent back to their countries of origin.

§2: Cooperation for Peace and Security

666- Measures taken relate to border governance and stabilisation and judicial cooperation.

A: Border Governance and Stabilisation Measures

667- Cross-border security was the focus of discussions between authorities of neighbouring countries. Regarding the border with Gabon, from 22 to 24 November 2022, Cameroon hosted the Technical Experts Meeting which is an implementation of the recommendations of the 2nd session of the Ad Hoc Commission on the Borders of the 2 countries, and the 1st session of the Permanent Joint Commission on Border Security. Deliberations, under the aegis of the "Borders" programme of the Economic Community of Central African States, was based on the examination and adoption of bilateral legal instruments on cross-border cooperation; the establishment of the Joint Border Commission and the preparation of the schedule of activities relating to joining the segment of the border between the Kom and Ayina rivers. The management of the border with Central African Republic was addressed during a meeting in Ngaoundere, on 10 November 2022, by the Ministers of Defence of both countries. During the meeting, they reiterated the commitment of their respective countries to the search for lasting stability and peace.

668- Moreover, regarding the management of the border with Chad, a working meeting took place on 3 October 2023 between the Ministers of Defence of both countries. They agreed to set up a joint working group to address the issues of terrorism, inter-state transhumance, various illicit trafficking, the movement of armed groups and weapons of all calibers.

669- This willingness to cooperate was also reflected in the sub-region, through the continuous discussions with Nigeria, Niger and Chad within the formal framework of the "Regional Strategy for the Stabilisation, Recovery and Resilience of the *Boko Haram*-affected areas of the Lake Chad Basin". This cooperation was carried out under the aegis of the Lake Chad Basin Commission and the African Union.

B : Judicial Cooperation

670- In addition, the incessant calls by the Head of State coupled with activism of CSOs to States of refuge for citizens of Cameroon involved in the violence in the South West and North West were met with legal consequences. Thus, **C.N., F.C., L.N.L.** were prosecuted on 28 November 2022 by the judicial authorities of the United States. On 21 March 2023, the Maryland District Court sentenced **E.F.N.** and 2 of his accomplices to 5 years in prison, including 2 years on probation and a fine of USD 25,000²⁸⁷.(CFAF15550,00 They were found guilty of smuggling firearms from the United States to Nigeria with Cameroon as their final destination. By 2 separate decisions of 18 and 20 April 2023, **T.E.B.** and **M.N.** were sentenced to 4 years in prison by the American justice system, for attempting to transfer firearms to Cameroon through Nigeria. Moreover, on 24 September 2024, the war crimes and crimes against humanity investigation unit of the Norwegian Criminal Police said it had arrested **A. C. L.**, one of the instigators of the violence relating to the Anglophone crisis.

671- In a nutshell, the awareness of belonging to a united and indivisible State was strengthened by measures to guarantee respect for the rights of all and the participation of all components of society in political and economic management. Moreover, the tranquillity and security of all was guaranteed by the State through joint actions combining military resources, the strengthening of the army/nation duo, the search for peaceful solutions to crises and the help of international partners. The sustainability of peace, which guarantees economic development and the well-being of the population, requires a continuous combination of all these actions.

CHAPTER 6: PROTECTION AGAINST RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

672- Parts B (non-discrimination and equality before the law), C (gender equality and the fight against discrimination), E (non-discrimination and equality before the law) and F (right to equality and the fight against discrimination) of this Report contain relevant developments on the issue of protection against racial discrimination.

CHAPTER 7: DUTIES PROVIDED FOR BY THE CHARTER

673- The Constitution recognizes that all persons have duties, as it is stated in its preamble that *“all persons shall have equal rights and obligations...Every person shall in the burden of public expenditure according to his financial resources...All citizens shall contribute to the defence of the fatherland...”*

674- The legal framework for volunteerism was strengthened and various activities were carried out to promote mutual respect and tolerance as well as social and national solidarity among others.

²⁸⁷ About 23,740.46Euros

Section 1: Duties towards Mutual Respect and Tolerance, as well as Social and National Solidarity (Articles 28, 29(2)(4)).

675- Citizen education was carried out with the goal of promoting civic education, national integration, youth participation, volunteering and values relating to living together, economic, social, environmental and political patriotism. Various stakeholders are involved in this education including, the National Civic Service Agency for Participation in Development, and the National Civic Education Programme for Moral, Civic and Entrepreneurial Rearmament launched in 2022, both structures under the Ministry of Youth and Civic Education (MINJEC). *Civic education was carried out for 6 285 618 youths in 2022 including 1 083 270 youths by structures under MINJEC.*

676- Considering that volunteering is a powerful force that transforms communities in numerous ways, it was consolidated by Law No. 2021/015 of 09 July 2021 to organize and promote volunteering in Cameroon. As per Section 2: (1) of the Law, *volunteering shall seek the social mobilization and enhancement of skills and human resources for general interest work and introduction to public affairs management in the public and private sectors, in particular for economic, social, health, educational, cultural, sporting and tourist development and sustainable development.* Furthermore, Section 3 provides that *volunteering activities shall be carried out in accordance with the principle of solidarity between the various components of society, to promote the values of peace, citizenship, humanitarian cooperation and the performance of public utility works.* The National Civic Service Agency for Participation in Development continued to train volunteers including 750 in 2022.

677- Solidarity continued to be shown by the population towards those who were victims of catastrophes, security crisis or inter-communal conflicts. For example, between July and September 2024, the Far North region witnessed heavy rains leading to flooding which caused significant loss in terms of, human and animal deaths, destruction of houses and other property in several localities in the Diamare, Mayo-Tsanaga, Mayo-Danay, Mayo-Kani and Logone and Chari Divisions. The one in Yagoua was particularly destructive. National solidarity was evident, as apart from emergency funds made available by the State, others including churches, associations and personalities raised funds to assist the flood victims.

678- Also, following clashes between the Massa/Mousgoum and Arab Choas in the Logone and Chari Division in 2021, the sites on which emergency shelters were built for displaced persons were provided by traditional rulers.

Section 2: Other Duties

679- With regard to the payment of taxes imposed by law in the interest of the community, following the laws in force, citizens have to pay relevant taxes. The law provides for penalties where such taxes are not paid.

680- In terms of strengthening African cultural values, the teaching of mother languages was introduced in school. See §448.

681- Concerning the duty to protect the territorial integrity of the State, this is part of citizen education, see §644 et seq and 675 et seq. Furthermore, the NDDRC was created in 2018 and tasked with organizing, supervising and managing the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-fighters of *Boko Haram* and groups in the North West and South West Regions willing to respond favourably to the Head of State's peace appeal by laying down their arms. Ce Comité a également continue à déradicaliser les ex-combattants. Pour de plus informations, (see § 582 and 663)

CONCLUSION

682- Actions were carried out by the State to strengthen the respect for civil and political rights as well as social, economic and cultural rights. These ensured a guarantee of life, security, freedom of expression, freedom of movement and freedom of worship for all. Specific measures were taken to guarantee the rights of indigenous peoples. Ultimately, access to education and health led to an improvement in the living conditions of the population.

PART B: 1ST, 2ND AND 3RD PERIODIC REPORTS OF THE STATE UNDER THE MAPUTO PROTOCOL

683- This document reports on the implementation of the recommendations made to the State of Cameroon following the review of its 4th, 5th and 6th combined periodic reports in 2020 and the measures taken to implement the Maputo Protocol.

SUB PART I: STATE OF IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS MADE UNDER THE MAPUTO PROTOCOL

684- Several recommendations were made to the State of Cameroon as part of the implementation of the Protocol: the submission of periodic reports, the dissemination of the Maputo Protocol at the national level, equality and non-discrimination, violence against women, the fight against forced marriage, access to justice and protection before the law, participation in decision-making processes, economic, social and cultural rights and categories enjoying social welfare.

Section 1: Submission of Periodic Reports

685- Cameroon submitted its previous Combined Report comprising the Initial Report under this Protocol in 2019 and defended it in March 2020. This report thus comprises for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Periodic Reports of the State under this Protocol.

Section 2: Dissemination of the Maputo Protocol at the National Level.

686- As part of the dissemination and popularisation of the Maputo Protocol, Cameroon adopted the social and behaviour change communication strategy through which mass awareness-raising campaigns were organised during various commemorative days of the rights of women and girls (16 days of activism against gender-based violence, International Women's Day, Africa's Women's Day...) on themes such as the right to sexual and reproductive health, abolition of forced marriage, fight against economic violence, etc. These campaigns were carried out in the official languages and in local languages.

687- Several other awareness-raising campaigns were carried out through the media, community radio stations, social media among others. These campaigns were carried out in the 10 regions of the country by State institutions, CSOs and NGOs advocating for women's rights. During these campaigns which reached women, men, youths, community, religious and traditional leaders reach Positive masculinity was promoted through the *He for She* and *Men Engaged* campaigns. On this occasion, thousands of brochures containing the Maputo Protocol were distributed.

Section 3: Equality and Non-Discrimination (Articles 2 and 3)

688- This section provides responses to the recommendations concerning the amendment of the law relating to the nationality of women, the inclusion of a definition of discrimination, aligning customary law provisions with those of the Maputo Protocol, gender pay gap and the adoption of appropriate legal provisions and policies.

§1: Amendment of the Law relating to the Nationality of Women

689- The State takes note of the recommendation.

§2: Inclusion of a Definition of Discrimination

690- National policies are inclusive. This is the case with the National Gender Policy (NGP) which enshrined the definition of discrimination. The aim of the NGP is to provide conditions that are favourable to the development of the people of Cameroon, i.e. women and men, girls and boys without any form of discrimination, through 7 strategic thrusts. Each strategic thrust summarises the problems identified in the sector and is divided into objectives and priority areas for action on the basis of which multisectoral logical frameworks are built.

§3: Aligning with the Maputo Protocol Customary Law Provisions

691- Article 1 (2) of the Constitution of the Republic of Cameroon enshrines the recognition and protection of traditional values in accordance with democratic principles, Human Rights and the law. Since the Maputo Protocol was adopted, Cameroon adopted laws and strategic documents aimed at combating harmful customary practices. Thus, as part of the amendment of the Penal Code in 2016, new offences were introduced such as genital mutilation (Section 277-1), prevention of growth of organ (Section 277-2), sexual harassment (Section 302-1), eviction from the matrimonial home (Section 358-1) and interference with the right to education or training (Section 355-2).

692- In addition, the drafting in 2021 and the implementation of the Gender Strategy of the National Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Committee (2021-2025), one of the priority areas of which is the fight against harmful cultural practices in crisis areas, enabled the State to carry out outreach activities with local populations to combat child marriages in times of crisis and other persisting harmful cultural practices.

693- In addition, the Government is working in close collaboration with traditional and religious leaders to put an end to harmful cultural practices. In this connection, the State signed partnership agreements with some associations such as the Cameroon Council of Imams and Muslim Dignitaries (CIDIMUC), the Council of Protestant Churches of Cameroon (CEPCA), the National Episcopal Conference of Cameroon (CENC) to combat gender-based violence (GBV) including child marriages and other harmful cultural practices.

§4: Gender Pay Gap and Adoption of Appropriate Legal Provisions and Policies

694- Cameroon takes note of the Recommendation.

Section 4: Violence against Women (Articles 4 and 5)

695- Cameroon intensified the fight against GBV by ensuring the popularisation and implementation of instruments relating to the fight against digital violence, the implementation of national policies to combat GBV including the development of the strategic framework, awareness raising on the eradication of harmful practices, repression and care for victims.

§1: Popularisation and Implementation of Instruments relating to the Fight against Digital Violence

696- Actions were taken by the State to prevent and combat gender-based violence committed through technologies (online sexual harassment, online stalking, sharing of intimate images without consent, etc.), amongst which, the adoption of Law No. 2023/9 of 25 July 2023 to institute the charter on child online protection in Cameroon in order to make the cyber space more secure for children, including girls.

697- Moreover, in order to adhere to international standards in the fight against cybercrime, including against women, the State of Cameroon ratified the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime by Decree No. 2022/169 of 23 November 2022.

698- Cybercrime offences against women and girls were prosecuted and sanctioned. To illustrate, the Douala-Bonanjo CFI, by judgment No. 553/FD/COR of 3 March 2022 sentenced **M.C.M. and W.E.** respectively to 4 and 9 months imprisonment and to pay a fine of CFAF 500,000²⁸⁸ FCFA and CFAF 1,000,000²⁸⁹, for obscene publication and violation of the victim's privacy.

§2: Amendment of the Penal Code to include Marital Rape, Domestic Violence and Female Genital Mutilation

699- Genital mutilation (Section 277-1), rape (Section 296) and violence (275 et seq.) are already punishable under the Cameroon Penal Code, regardless of the perpetrator and the victim. In Section 1, this Code specifies that all persons shall be subject to criminal law.

§3: Implementation of National Policies to combat GBV

700- With a view to continuing the fight against GBV, the following documents were adopted and implemented: the National Strategy to combat GBV and its national plan of action for the elimination of female genital mutilation, the terms of reference of relevant local committees, and

²⁸⁸ About 763.36 Euros.

²⁸⁹ About 1,524.49 Euros.

the National Plan of Action to end child marriage. For more details on these policies, see §704 et seq.

§4: Awareness-raising on the Eradication of Harmful Practices

701- The State works in close collaboration with traditional, community and religious leaders to end harmful traditional practices. Emphasis is laid on training these leaders to be agents of change in their communities in order to better convey the message.

702- Regarding awareness-raising, several toll-free numbers, including 116 (MINPROFF), 1503 (MINAS) and 1523 (CDHC), were made available to the population to encourage them to report cases of abuse.

703- Much more, as part of the celebration of the campaign termed *16 days of activism against gender-based violence* where the civil society is strongly involved, activities regularly organised to end violence against women and girls help raise awareness amongst a large number of people. For the year 2022 alone, 70,179 persons were reached through these activities.

§5: Strengthening the Repression of Violence against Women

704- At the strategic level, most of the policies that were developed to combat GBV prescribe the increased repression of such violence. Indeed, the National Strategy to combat GBV (2022-2026) focusses on the repression and holistic care for victims/survivors, with the involvement of all stakeholders.

705- In addition, the National Plan of Action for the elimination of female genital mutilation (FGM) (2022-2026) and the National Plan of Action to end child marriages (2020-2024), provide for the suppression of such violence.

706- In addition, Circular letters No. 13/23/C/MINESEC/SG/DPPC/DAJ/DOVAS of 10 November 2023 on strengthening the fight against gender-based violence in schools, and No. 12/B/1464/L-C/MINEDUB/cab of 27 November 2023 on measures to protect girls against GBV in schools, provide for measures to be taken to sanction perpetrators of violence in schools.

707- In terms of training, 103 security and judicial stakeholders in the Adamawa, East, North and Far North Regions participated in workshops organised with the support of the National Programme for Participatory Development in 2023.

708- During the reference period, several persons were brought before courts for offences relating to GBV and some were convicted. To illustrate, in the People vs **E.K.B.**, the Fako HC, by Judgment No. HCF/CRIM/JGT/145/2022 sentenced the accused, who was prosecuted for rape, to 18 years imprisonment.

709- In addition, considering the recent upsurge in femicides, investigations were opened and proceedings initiated. For example, by Judgment No. 30/CRIM/24 of 6 March 2024, the Ebolowa Military Tribunal found E.E.F (Civil Administrator) guilty of the murder of **TABA Lydienne** and

sentenced him to 10 years in prison, to pay a fine worth CFAF238,360²⁹⁰ and to pay the sum of CFAF 45,000,000²⁹¹ to the rightful claimants of the deceased as damages. The case was pending at the Court of Appeal of the South.

§6: Care for Victims of GBV, including Domestic Violence

710- To meet the needs of GBV survivors, including domestic violence, the State established services to provide care for these persons. Thus, the State invested in the setting-up and management of Women Empowerment and Family Centres (CPFF), which provide survivors with general skills in income-generating activities. At the end of 2024, MINPROFF had 122 operational CPFF all over the national territory in which more than 206,000 women and girls, including GBV survivors were trained. In addition, the State set up *Gender and Child Desks*²⁹² in police stations (20) and gendarmerie units (8), making a total of 28. More than 2,500 Gendarmes and Police Officers were trained to receive and provide assistance to GBV survivors according to international standards, including confidentiality and active listening.

711- Thanks to the implementation of the Sahel Women Empowerment and Demographic Dividend Project (SWEDD2), the State trained 90 mentors and 9 supervisors to set up 45 safe spaces within CPFF and Multipurpose Youth Empowerment Centres (CMPJ) in the 3 target regions (Adamawa, Far North and North), and within schools and communities in the 165 Councils targeted by the project. The State equally did a mapping of safe spaces which increased from 10 in 2020 to 47 in 2024, as well as the national mapping of stakeholders involved in the provision of support to victims of GBV, in the prevention of GBV, in the management of cases of gender-based violence and humanitarian coordination, that is 242 stakeholders.

Section 5: Combating Forced Marriages (Articles 6 and 7)

712- The recommendations under this Section focus on the fight against marriage before the age of 18 and forced marriage, as well as awareness raising on harmful traditional practices.

§1: Combating Marriages before the Age of 18 and Forced Marriage

713- In addition to Law No. 2016/7 of 12 July 2016 relating to the Penal Code which in its Section 356, criminalises forced marriage provides for an aggravated sentence when the victim is a minor, the State drafted and implemented the National Plan of Action to end child marriages (2020-2024). This document is focused on the mobilisation of families and communities as agents of change. Through access to health, education and justice, the State was able to fight this phenomenon in the target regions and to reduce the number of child marriages.

714- The State also actively engaged in the organisation of awareness-raising sessions for families and communities on the fight against child marriage through the adoption and

²⁹⁰About 363.91Euros.

²⁹¹About 68,702.29Euros.

²⁹²A *Gender or child desk* is a special office within police and gendarmerie services to assist victims of GBV. It is a starting point for survivors of GBV who request legal assistance. It is a safe space where they can be received.

implementation of the *positive parenting programme* since 2023. Thus, in 2024, 138 MINPROFF personnel were trained as trainers for the dissemination of this programme at the national level. Through this programme, about 3,500,000 people were reached throughout the national territory between 2023 and 2024.

715- A microfilm of 23 minutes on the negative effects of child marriage was also produced and screened from 2020 to 2022 by MINPROFF in Bertoua, Kette, Kenzou, Ouli, Betare-Oya, Garoua-Boulai, Maroua, Garoua, Ngaoundere, Meiganga and Tibati. In total, about 4,000,000 persons were reached through this mobile caravan.

716- Moreover, 12 awareness-raising workshops against child marriages were organised with community leaders in Bertoua, Garoua, Maroua and Ngaoundere reaching about 10,000 people between 2019 and 2024. The State also held educative talks on the occasion of the commemoration of the International Day of the Girl Child in the Far North, North, Adamawa and East Regions reaching more than 6,000,000 persons between 2019 and 2024. In addition, to allow children live in a violence-free environment, a national campaign was held from October 2023 to September 2024 on sexual violence against children, particularly girls, in the cities of Kribi, Bafoussam, Garoua, Maroua, Ebolowa and Bertoua. The awareness of more than 3,000,000 persons was raised during this campaign.

717- The implementation of the above-mentioned strategic documents and awareness-raising among traditional and religious communities encouraged parents to send their girls to school instead of giving them in marriage. To illustrate, in the Batouri High School in the East Region, the number of girl students increased from about 50 in 2020 to more than 300 in 2024, thanks to outreach campaigns organised with the involvement of religious leaders.

718- The State also ensured the repression of child marriage as was the case through Judgment No. 150/COR of 25/8/2020, where the defendant **D.R.** was found guilty of attempted forced marriage and false arrest, and then sentenced to one year imprisonment and a fine of CFAF 25,000²⁹³. **E.W.**, the father of the girl, a co-offender in the case was deprived of parental authority over the victim for a period of 5 years.

§2: Awareness-raising on Harmful Traditional Practices

719- In order to strengthen the protection of children and fight against harmful traditional practices, several measures were taken. Thus, the National Plan of Action for the elimination of female genital mutilation was updated for the 2022-2026 period to get local stakeholders in the fight against this scourge more involved. Terms of reference for local committees fighting FGM were drawn up to harmonise interventions on the field and their mastery and popularisation were ongoing.

²⁹³ About 38.17 Euros.

Section 6: Access to Justice and Equal Protection before the Law (Article 8)

720- Measures to foster and promote women’s access to justice, judicial proceedings and disciplinary sanctions against law enforcement personnel involved in cases of violence against women and girls, will be discussed in this Section.

§1: Measures to Foster and Promote Women’s Access to Justice

721- To improve women’s access to justice, the State directed its action towards raising the awareness of the people and training several stakeholders involved in the repression of violence against women and girls. Awareness-raising for the general public aimed at informing women of their rights, as well as encourage them to report any case of GBV were carried out.

722- Between 2021 and 2022, MINJUSTICE, in collaboration with UN Women, organised activities on GBV in the North West and South West Regions (Bamenda, Santa, Limbe and Buea) and in the Far North Region (Kolofata, Koza, and Goulfey). In this context, some 120 persons (Judicial and Legal Officers, Lawyers and Medical Doctors) were trained on GBV, close to 500 persons participated in awareness raising campaigns and mobile clinics. During awareness raising campaigns, the importance of reporting acts of violence and on actions to be taken by victims, including obtaining forensic medical certificates were emphasised. The State continued sanctioning cases of violence. For example, in Judgment No. HCF/CRIM/JGT/096/2022 of the Fako HC, the Judge justified the sentence life imprisonment against **N.R.F.**, by analysing rape as a form of violence, the impact of which goes beyond the physical aspect and deeply affects the victim’s soul.

723- Despite the withdrawal of the complaint simple harm and conditional threats by the former partner of the accused person, **K.R.**, the Legal Department continued proceedings which led to the conviction of **K.R.** to 12 months in prison and a fine of CFAF 50,000²⁹⁴ through Judgment No. 170/COR of 8 May 2023 of the Foubot CFI.

724- Through the enforcement of Law No. 2009/4 of 14 April 2009 to organise legal aid which enables the State to bear the costs of proceedings initiated by poor and vulnerable persons, including women, legal aid commissions set up in courts granted applications submitted. In 2021 for example, out of 182 applications filed, 100 were granted in favour of indigent person, including women victims of GBV.

§2: Criminal Proceedings and Disciplinary Sanctions against Persons in charge of implementing the Law

725- Persons in charge of implementing the Law, like other people, who were accused of GBV were subject to investigations and faced judicial and disciplinary sanctions where the facts were established.

²⁹⁴ About 76.34 Euros.

Section 7: Participation in Policy and Decision-Making (Article 9)

726- The State takes note of the Recommendation related to women’s participation in the design, implementation and assessment of development policies or programmes. Concerning the 2nd aspect of recommendation, the efforts made so far in terms of enhancing women’s leadership and their participation in the public and political life of the country will be presented.

§1: Enhancing Women’s Leadership

727- Efforts to enhance women’s leadership were maintained. Thus, several women were appointed to positions of responsibility during the period under review. As concerns territorial command, in 2024, 27 women were appointed as Sub-Divisional Officers, compared to 21 in 2020.

728- In the Army, in 2020, there were 2 women with the rank of Colonel. In 2024, this number increased to 16. The increase in the number of women with the rank of Colonel was equally significant in the National Gendarmerie from 0 in 2020 to 4 in 2024. The National Navy was not left behind. Indeed, since 2021, there is a woman with the rank of Colonel in the Navy, taking to 21 the number of women in Defence Forces promoted to the rank of Colonel from 2020 to 2024.

729- At the level of the Police, there was also a significant increase in the number of women *Commissaire Divisionnaire* (Commissioner of Police) (18 in 2018 compared to 44 in 2024).

730- In the judicial sector, women equally hold strategic positions, as presented in the table below.

Table 1: Distribution of Men and Women according to some Strategic Responsibilities in Judicial and Legal Services

Position	Number of women	Number of men	Total
COURTS			
Supreme Court	13	42	55
Special Criminal Court (Procureur General and President)	2	0	2
President of Court of Appeal	3	7	10
Procureur General at the Court of Appeal	0	10	10
President of Administrative Court	3	7	10
President of HC	3	9	12
President of CFI/HC	6	39	45
President of CFI	12	13	25
President of HC	0	3	3
State Counsel CFI/HC	5	49	54

State Counsel CFI	1	13	14
MINISTRY OF JUSTICE			
Secretary General	1	0	1
Inspector General	1	0	1
Directors and those ranking as such	3	13	16

Source: MINJUSTICE

731- In addition, MINPROFF regularly produced a document titled, Gender Track Record of Public Administrations and Parastatals aimed at assess progress in the appointment of women to decision-making positions, and continuing advocacy with decision makers.

732- The State continued outreach activities and capacity building of community and religious leaders for a change of mindset. Results were already visible, as more and more women were appointed within traditional governance institutions. At the level of 3rd class chiefdoms for example, there were 10 women in 2024, as against 6 in 2019. At the end of 2024, there were 256 women notables in lamibés.

§2: Women’s Participation in Public and Political Life

733- Political life in Cameroon was marked by the participation of women. In Parliament, the network of Female Parliamentarians which advocates for the improvement of women’s rights in both Houses, was set up at the end of the constitutive general assembly held on 16 June 2020.

734- Since 2022, a woman holds the position of Deputy Secretary General of the Senate, while a woman was maintained as Vice-Chairperson of the Electoral Board of ELECAM. Among the 18 members of the said Board, there are 5 women.

735- The number of women in Parliament and in the Councils increased. Thus, since March 2023, of the 100 Senators 33 are women, representing 33% compared to 26% in 2018. After the first regional elections held on 6 December 2020, there were 210 women elected Regional Councillors, representing a rate of 23.4%. Also, 12 women were elected as members of regional council executives compared to 60 men, a rate of 20%. Following the municipal elections of 9 February 2020, there was an improvement in female representation within municipal councils, with 2,541 women out of the 10,626 Municipal Councillors elected in 2020, (24% compare to 16% in 2012) . The proportion of female Mayors increased to 10.83% compared to 6.94% during the previous elections.

Section 8: Promotion of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Articles 12-17)

736- The promotion of economic, social and cultural rights included the right to education, the legal and social protection of women working in the informal sector, Improving Health Facilities and Rural Women and Girls’ Access to Healthcare, the fight against maternal mortality, access to contraceptives and maternal and child health care and abortion. Moreover,

the ratification of Convention No. 189 of the International Labour Organisation was subject to discussions.

§1: Measures to Ensure Girls' Equal Access to and Stay in School at all Levels of Education

737- The State adopted the 2023-2030 Education and Training Sector Strategy which specifically includes the need to transform the education sector to ensure equity, inclusion and the quality of learning aligned with the development needs of the country.

738- To ensure girls and young women's access to all levels of education, strategic choices of the State were geared towards the update of the National Policy of Inclusive Education (2024-2030). Through this policy, the State will focus on three main areas of intervention: improving access and ensuring the social welfare of persons with specific needs in schools and training institutions, transforming 1,289 school facilities and training institutions, recruiting and training 8,075 Teachers and trainers from school facilities. In addition, Functional Literacy Centres (CAF) and Non-Formal Basic Education Centres (CEBNF) were set up throughout the national territory.

739- In the same vein, Order No. 62/A/501/A/MINEDUB/SG/DAEBNFPLN of 18 June 2021 to set up and open Non-Formal Basic Education Public Centres (CEBNF) and Order No. 25/B1/1464/MINEDUB/SG/DAEBNFPLN/SAFPLN of 28 April 2023 to set up and open Public Functional Literacy Centres (CAF) in prisons, were signed making it possible to expand literacy among young women and girls in conflict with the law.

740- Concerning the fight against school dropouts, actions were taken to ensure that young women and girls pursue their education. So, Circular Letter No. 12/B/1464/L-C/MINEDUB/CAB of 27 November 2023 to lay down measures to protect young girls against GBV in school was signed in order to secure the school environment against the scourge.

741- The State equally ensured the progressive implementation of nursery and primary school curricula since their adoption in September 2018, through the training of Teachers and stakeholders in the pedagogical supervision chain, with the support of partners.

742- As a remedy to the closing of schools after the Covid-19 pandemic and in a bid to ensure the teaching/learning process, the State implemented two actions: the production and dissemination of lessons through the radio and television on the one hand and the organisation of 10 regional workshops to train Teachers in the production and use of lessons that were to be disseminated in audio/visual mode in June 2020, on the other hand. This approach made it possible for thousands out-of-school girls to have access to lessons.

743- In addition, teaching guides for new subjects introduced in the new curricula (national languages and cultures and personal development) were drawn up, and Teachers and stakeholders in the pedagogical supervision chain were trained in the use of these guides, which

are technical documents that provide guidelines in the application of gender-sensitive and methodological teaching approaches prescribed in the said curricula in 2021 and 2024.

744- The literacy rate increased from 66.68% in 2021 to 67.5% in 2022. As concerns secondary education, Circular Letter No. 13/23/C/MINESEC/SG/DPPC/DAJ/DOVAS of 10 November 2023 to strengthen the fight against gender-based violence in schools facilitates the development of suitable functional mechanisms to prevent GBV in schools, and the preservation of a favourable school environment.

745- To avoid expulsion of pregnant girls from school, Circular Letter No. 2/C/MINESEC/CAB of 22 April 2022 of the Minister of Secondary Education to lay down modalities for the management of students' pregnancies in public and private secondary schools, provides that any pregnant student is authorised to continue her studies till the 26th week of pregnancy, and resume school after delivery. The said Circular also provides for applicable disciplinary measures if the author of the pregnancy is a student, a Teacher or any other school personnel.

746- From 2022, the State carried out the campaign in secondary schools called *Clean school for clean girls*. This campaign centred on promoting the management of menstrual hygiene. It contributed to promoting the management of menstrual hygiene, training young girls in the tailoring of washable hygiene accessories (sanitary pads, menstrual pants, masks) among other things, in 9 schools in Yaounde 2. It also made it possible to organise a media campaign with the conception of advertising spots on menstrual hygiene. In 2 years, more than 2,000,000 young girls were reached by this campaign.

747- Moreover, the State granted 800 scholarships to girl students in scientific and technological fields for the 2020-2021 academic year. With regard to higher education, the State granted excellence awards to the best girl students in scientific and technological fields. A total of 2,720 girls received excellence awards during the period under review.

§2: Ratification of Convention No. 189 of the International Labour Organisation

748- Cameroon took note of the Recommendation.

§ 3: Extension of the Legal and Social Protection to Include Women Working in the Informal Sector

749- The normative framework relating to the protection of persons under Cameroon's jurisdiction also applies to women working in the informal sector. Concerning social welfare, women can subscribe to voluntary insurance with the NSIF.

§4: Improving Health Infrastructure and Access to Healthcare for Rural Women and Girls

750- Information on the right to health (§103 et seq , 294 et seq and 872 et seq) apply to women and girls in rural areas.

§5: Managing the Shortage of Blood in Blood Banks as a Means to Combat Maternal Mortality

751- The number of blood bags collected yearly rose steadily. It rose from 94,873 in 2018 to 140,207 in 2021 then to 147,207 in 2022 and 157,481 in 2023.

§6: Guaranteeing Access to Contraceptives and Services Related to Maternal and Child Health

752- The National Health Strategic Plan of Cameroon-NHSP (2021-2025) which deals with improving the healthcare coverage of vulnerable populations through the promotion of health, prevention of diseases and provision of care, was drawn up.

753- In line with community guidelines and the framework of the community Integrated Management of Childhood Illness, 14,567 children, mostly girls, were treated free of charge, for cases of simple malaria, respiratory infections, diarrhoea and severe acute malnutrition by 16 multipurpose community health workers of the Far North Region, from January to June 2023.

754- The NHSP equally prescribes the full participation of RLAs in the financing and management of health services in their territory. It is in this context that the Mokolo Council for example, included the sum of CFAF 2,000,000²⁹⁵ in its 2023 budget to pay multipurpose community health workers. This sum was distributed to 40 workers on 2 November 2023.

§7: Abortion

755- Currently, cases that can give rise to abortion are provided for by Section 339 of the Cameroon Penal Code which is similar to the provisions of Article 14 Paragraph 2 (c) of the Maputo Protocol.

Section 9: Categories Enjoying Social Protection (Articles 20-24)

756- The State took action to promote and protect the rights of older women and women with disabilities, widows, as well as women and girls in prison.

§1: Protection of Older Women and Women with Disabilities

757- The rights of older women and women with disabilities were promoted and protected.

A: Protection of Older Women

758- In 2010, the State drew up a National Policy Paper for the Promotion and Protection of Older Persons, which takes into consideration the rights of older women. The State also adopted a National Social Protection Policy (NSPP) 2020-2030 which takes underprivileged groups into account. The strategic objectives of this Policy that takes into account older women aims to

²⁹⁵ About 3,053.44 Euros.

extend social protection of the population, especially for the most vulnerable, with emphasis on building an integrated system.

B: Protection of Women with Disabilities

759- The State implemented its policy on the prevention, assistance and protection of socially vulnerable persons, which focuses on cross-cutting and multifaceted actions carried out by devolved services all over the national territory (Regional and Divisional Delegations), operational technical units (social centres and social action services), as well as specialised institutions and establishments responsible for education, healthcare and social integration of persons with disabilities, including women.

760- At the strategic level, the State took measures to promote social entrepreneurship which is based on the social inclusion policy which promotes national solidarity. Thus, strategic documents were drafted to promote the protection of vulnerable persons in general, and persons with disabilities in particular. Some of these strategic documents include the National Inclusion Policy.

761- In addition, to promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities, Order No. 40/PM of 19 May 2022 to lay down terms and conditions for granting age exemption to persons with disabilities during competitive examinations and recruitment in the Public Service made it possible to recruit persons with disabilities, including women. It should be noted that from 2019 to 2024, 13 persons with disabilities, including women, passed ENAM entrance examinations, comprising 12 persons living with motor disability and one with a visual impairment.

762- Circular Letter No. 19/21/MINESEC/IGE/IP-OVS/SVS of 16 November 2021 to reiterate and supplement certain provisions on the consideration of the disability and vulnerable persons approach in Government secondary general, technical, and vocational schools as well as teachers training colleges in Cameroon, contributed to improving inclusive education for girls and women with disabilities. Moreover, through Decree No. 2020/632 of 19 October 2020 to lay down the establishment, organisation and functioning of the Maroua Centre for the Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities, the State ensures the inclusion of persons with disabilities living in the Far North Region, including women.

§2: Protecting Widows' Rights

763- The State took several actions in favour of 15,259 widows from 2021 to 2024 including training them in income generating activities (IGA). From 2019 to 2024, 15,027 families comprising widows and orphans received financial, material support and assistance. Some widows equally received legal assistance and psychosocial support, especially through the production in 2022 and the dissemination (7,000 hard copies from 2022 to 2023) of the Widows Legal Guide, available in the 2 official languages and 4 local languages (Ewondo, Ffuldéd, Ghomala, and Pidjin). The audio version of the Guide is regularly broadcasted on community radio stations throughout the national territory.

764- In order to change mind-sets to eradicate harmful cultural practices that affect women, including widows, the State set up 34 platforms for the promotion of positive social standards, gender equality and positive masculinity. These platforms involve men and boys.

765- In addition, widows' inheritance rights were guaranteed through Court Judgments. Thus, the Foumbot CFI, by Judgment No. 194/TPD/2023 of 5 July 2023, granted the right of usufruct to widow **P.S.** over all the assets of the estate. By Judgment No. 253/TPD of 6 September 2023, the Tignere TPD also declared widow **A.D.R.** as administrator of the estate of her late husband, but also guardian of the children and granted her the right of usufruct with one quarter of the assets of the estate.

§ 3: Protecting the Rights of Women and Girls in Prisons

766- The Penitentiary Administration of Cameroon takes into account the needs of detained women and girls, and makes specific arrangements for them in prison. With regard to social reintegration, women and girls were involved in vocational trainings offered by the State and its partners, including sewing, hairdressing, weaving among others. Moreover, the State regularly organised socio-cultural activities and educative talks in which detained women and girls actively participated.

767- With regard to health, every year since 2020, the State finances the distribution of menstrual hygiene kits to women detainees to support the initiatives of social partners.

SUB-PART II: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MAPUTO PROTOCOL

768- The NDS30 and other strategic documents adopted by Cameroon, including the National Gender Policy, are reference frameworks which made it possible for the State to promote and protect women's rights in Cameroon. This Sub Part shall examine equality and the fight against discrimination, the protection of women against violence, the protection of rights relating to marriage, economic, social and cultural rights and social protection, the right to peace, the protection of women in armed conflicts and the rights of vulnerable groups of women enjoying special protection.

CHAPTER 1: GENDER EQUALITY AND THE FIGHT AGAINST DISCRIMINATION

769- The State continued to carry out actions to restore equality of rights between men and women during the period under review and these included improving the legal and strategic framework, equal access to justice, inclusion of women in the management of public affairs and improving the right to education and training for women.

Section 1: Improving the Normative and Strategic Framework of Gender Promotion

770- For better promotion and protection of Human Rights in Cameroon, Law No. 2019/14 of 19 July 2019 relating to the establishment, organisation and functioning of the Cameroon Human Rights Commission was adopted. This Law provides in Section 4 that "the Commission shall contribute to developing a human rights culture based on the ideals of peace, equal rights and responsibilities, mutual respect and sustainable development". Section 14 (3) of this law provides that women must account for at least 30% of the Commission members.

771- Law No. 2022/14 of 14 July 2022 relating to medically assisted reproduction in Cameroon was also adopted. This law introduces an innovation concerning the sexual and reproductive health of women.

772- At the strategic level, women's rights were taken into consideration in drawing up the NDS30. One of the priorities defined is gender equality and women empowerment. This demonstrates that the State of Cameroon guarantees development for women as much as for men.

773- Furthermore, Cameroon updated its National Gender Policy (NGP). Indeed, the evaluation of the NGP adopted in 2014 and its Multisectoral Plan of Action which came to an end in 2020 led to the identification of shortcomings which were corrected in the updated Policy Document. The objective of the NGP is to create favourable conditions for the wellbeing of the people of Cameroon, without any form of discrimination through seven strategic thrusts. Each strategic thrust summarises problems identified in the sector relating to gender equality and breaks down into objectives and priority action areas upon which multi-sectoral logical frameworks were built.

774- Implementation of the NGP led to the designation of Gender Focal Points. Upon the request of MINPROFF, these gender focal points, gender sensitive budgeting focal points and gender and statistics focal points were designated from public and semi-public administrations and institutions. Consequently, terms of reference detailing their missions were drawn up.

Section 2: Equal Access to Justice (Article 8)

775- Regarding access to justice by women, see §721 et seq.

Section 3: Inclusion of Women in the Management of Public Affairs (Article 8)

776- Women were taken into account in improving the strategic framework and in the decentralisation process, in the progressive institutionalisation of gender-sensitive budgeting as well as in the reform of gender statistics.

§1: Inclusion of Women in Improving the Strategic Framework

777- At the strategic level, women's rights were taken into account when drawing up the NDS30. Some of the priorities defined included gender equality and women empowerment. This demonstrates that the State guarantees development for women as much as for men. Indeed, it is indicated in the NDS30 that for the reference period, the State intends to continue its policy of equal access by girls and boys, men and women to education, training and information as well as strengthening the institutional framework for the promotion and protection of women's rights including programmes designed to promote female and youth entrepreneurship.

778- The State also intends to continue adopting principles aimed at ensuring better representation of women and youth in public and political life and to intensify consultations with the banking system to grant them loan. Measures to combat GBV are not left out.

779- The long-term vision of the National Gender Policy (2022 -2030) for Cameroon is to contribute to building an emerging and democratic country united in its diversity, in which men and women, girls and boys, enjoy equal rights, equal chances and equal opportunities to development. This vision is based on values of equity, equality, national solidarity, good governance, shared responsibility and social justice.

780- The National Gender Policy (NGP) spans 10 years. Thus by 2030, the State intends to improve gender equity and equality in the target sectors in line with deadlines set in the 2020-2030 National Development Strategy all over the country.

781- The NGP also takes into consideration perspectives of the African Union Agenda 2063 to improve the quality of life of the population and considerably reduce gender inequalities across the nation.

782- Mid-term evaluation of the implementation of the NGP helped reveal progress made in terms of gender-sensitive budgeting, women's economic empowerment and the fight against GBV.

§2: Inclusion of Women in the Decentralisation Process

783- Cameroon's strategy was to ensure that the gender approach was taken into account in implementing public policies in RLAs which are local councils and regional councils.

784- Law No. 2019/24 of 24 December 2019 to institute the general code of regional and local authorities enshrines the participation of all citizens, men and women, in local council and regional council activities as a principle of governance for RLAs. It demands representation of women and men in regional and municipal councils. The general code of RLAs lays down the participation of associations and civil society organisations as well as neighbourhood and village committees in achieving the objectives of RLAs.

785- The State also drafted the Local Governance Improvement Strategy through consideration of gender equality in the decentralisation and local development sub-sector for the period 2023-2027. Similarly, the Methodology Guide for drafting and updating council development plans takes the gender approach into consideration. Thousands of copies thereof were distributed all over the country.

786- Moreover, Order No. 147/A/MINDDEVEL of 19 July 2023 to lay down conditions for the establishment, organisation and functioning of neighbourhood or village committees as part of citizens' participation in council activities provides that gender should be taken into consideration in appointing its members and that the problems of the population must be identified and resolved. Hence, to improve the inclusion and participation of women, 30 pilot councils received support in the process of gender-sensitive budgeting.

787- The Special Council Support Fund (FEICOM) signed a partnership agreement with UN Women and started implementing a gender sub-strategy since 2022. The resulting strategic objectives include improving the level of gender consideration in the institution, building capacities of personnel on gender and gender parity, providing support for gender mainstreaming in RLA's activities through financing of gender sensitive projects. In this vein, FEICOM funded the construction of the Women Empowerment and Family Centre of the city of Lagdo to the tune of CFAF 170,959,443²⁹⁶.

788- As part of the implementation of the Livestock and Fish Farming Value Chains Development Project, which prioritised councils, the executives of which were led by women, FEICOM also funded the construction of markets in the Nkambe and Bafia councils as well as the Nkongsamba and Limbe City councils.

²⁹⁶About 261,006.78 Euros.

§3: Progressive Institutionalisation of Gender-Sensitive Budgeting

789- According to the Human Development Report, Cameroon's Gender Inequality Index value was 0.576 in 2016, ranking the country 138th out of 162. In 2020, this value was 0.560 and ranked the country 141st out of 162 globally. Cameroon fell behind again in this classification in 2021, ranking 145th with a value of 0.561. This situation resulted from the fact that national plans, programmes, strategies and budgets presenting development priorities had not yet taken commitments towards gender equality in a significant way. To address this issue, the Head of State, through Circular letters relating to the preparation of the State budget for the 2022, 2023 and 2024 financial years laid emphasis on gender sensitive budgeting in a bid to reduce gender inequality.

790- From 2021, the goal was thus to ensure that budgets contribute to reducing inequalities. In this vein, budget tools and institutions for validating them were adapted to allow for better clarity in terms of efforts made by sector administrations to reduce inequalities.

791- Moreover, a Gender Sensitive Budget Document (GSBD) has, since 2022, been appended to the Finance Law. This document highlights Government action aimed at promoting gender equality by establishing important links between policies put in place and corresponding budgetary allocations. It makes a gender sensitive analysis of programmes and projects in line with the budgets of ministries and their impact on the population. In addition to tools, the map of stakeholders involved in Gender Sensitive Budgeting (GSB) and a formalised framework for coordination with roles were clearly defined.

792- Given the evolution of GSB, gender committees are progressively replacing gender focal points. Their main role is to monitor the institutionalisation of gender in their organisations. Moreover, a GSB steering committee which brings together all these stakeholders was established.

§4: Reforming Gender Statistics

793- To continue its process of promoting gender equality, the State also undertook to reform gender statistics in order to measure gender inequalities, monitor progress made in achieving gender related SDGs and undertake research to develop and evaluate policies and actions that aim to eliminate gender inequalities.

794- Thus, gender was integrated in Cameroon's National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (SNDS). Indeed, a specific diagnosis on gender integration in the SNDS 2 (2014 - 2020) was carried out during the review of the SNDS, thus revealing its strengths and weaknesses in terms of gender. The new SNDS30 (2021 - 2030) was adopted during the extraordinary session of the National Statistics Council (NSC) on 15 April 2021 and enshrined a demand-based approach to statistical activity. Thus, it was decided that a gender module for SNDS30 be developed, based on the demand made evident by the NGP results framework.

795- Progress was made regarding the production of gender data and statistics with support from the Women Count Project by UN Women. Hence, the institutional framework for steering the production and use of gender statistics was reinforced with the creation on 2 May 2019 of the Cameroon Inter-ministerial Committee on Gender Statistics. It is the strategic guidance and supervision body for support to monitoring-evaluation of the National Gender Policy (NGP) through the improvement of the production and use of gender statistics in Cameroon for a better follow up of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and other international, regional and national planning frameworks. As such, the Committee guided and coordinated the planning and follow-up of activities carried out in the context of production and use of gender statistics over the past years, including the production of thematic reports or capacity building.

796- Furthermore, the National Statistical Information System (SNIS) defined the national gender-based statistical demand for the 2021-2030 period, with a view to ensuring the relevance of the production of gender statistics. During its 18th ordinary session in December 2019, the National Statistics Council adopted the minimum list of gender indicators and in doing so, committed the country to producing gender statistics. With the review of the National Gender Policy, statistical demand is now driven by the NGP result's framework, the indicators and meta data of which were specified for 2024.

797- Moreover, in 2023, about 150 data users and producers attended capacity-building sessions on gender analysis and integration in the production of official statistics and the use of these statistics to report on gender issues.

798- In addition, a training curriculum on the production and analysis of gender statistics was introduced in statistics and demography training schools, thus guaranteeing a larger number of statisticians and demographers trained on the production and analysis of gender statistics.

799- From 2020, Gender-sensitive statistics were taken into consideration in mid-term expenditures of the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family. As such, the Statistics Unit of MINPROFF had a budget allocated for its programme on gender statistics.

800- Also, the first Report titled Gender Profile Cameroon was produced in 2021. It became the main reference for all actions relating to gender issues in Cameroon over a period of five years highlighting the achievements and challenges of Gender equality in Cameroon through sectors such as national economy, human capital development and digitalisation. Thus, Members of Parliament used evidence provided by this document to draft the 2022 Finance Law representing the first year of implementation of the budget reform relating to the above-mentioned GSB.

Section 4: Right to Education and Training for Women (Article 12)

801- Regarding education of girls, see §737 et seq.

802- Regarding training, the State carried out several actions to improve women's competitiveness on the job market and their entrepreneurial skills. These included continuing

the construction of Women Empowerment and Family Centres (CPFF), specialised technical units that teach women and girls general skills in entrepreneurship and project design as well as management. These units are training spaces in specialised fields such as: clothing industry, aesthetics and hairdressing, hotel and catering, ICTs, the common curriculum being the establishment and management of income generating activities. The objective of the trainings offered was to facilitate the socio-professional integration of young girls and women. In 2024, 122 CPFF were operational, with over 200,000 women and girls trained. The State also granted support for the socio-economic integration of 3,411 women and girls trained in CPFF.

803- Capacity-building and support provided for 240 women and girls to set up activities in agriculture, livestock, functional literacy as well as handicraft in the localities of Mogode, Amchide, Batibo, Belo, Nguti and Idenau financed by the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) helped beneficiaries to carry out income generating activities to guarantee their economic empowerment. The same goes for training and support provided for 3,618 internally displaced young girls, refugees and host population to enable them set up activities in the the sewing, ICT, agro-pastoral and small trade industries in the CPFF in Buea, Bamenda 2, Yaounde 6, Mora, Mokolo, Douala, Bertoua and in other women's cohesion spaces in Minawao and Ngam as part of the Second Chance Education and Vocational Learning Project.

804- Moreover, the PCP ACEFA Programme laid emphasis on improving productivity and production of the poultry industry. Thus, women strengthened their capacities in modern aviculture techniques and 73 projects were financed. In addition, 22 improved poultry houses were acquired and distributed to peasant organisations (PO) and 10 training sessions organised for 328 people (including 107 women) on modern traditional chicken production techniques (264 women) and on modern broiler chicken production techniques (64 persons) in the context of the promotion of family poultry.

805- Better still, ProCISA trained about 26,006 producers of village chicken and 588 model farms were set up in 3 regions through trained facilitators (100 model farms in the Adamawa, 400 in the West and 88 in the North West). Some 3,088 livestock breeders/widows were sensitised on genetic modification of village chicken and trained on phytotherapy and feed formulation.

806- The Livestock and Fish Farming Value Chains Development Project led to the training of 93 representatives of pilot enterprises (enterprises/SME) involved in the transformation (of cattle and pig) including 26 women on the effective establishment of best practices in hygiene and a system which helps guarantee hygiene and food security in catering as per the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP). Through the same project, 55 women were trained in the area of bee keeping, especially on techniques to transform beehive products in the Adamawa Region as well as the distribution of 170,000 day-old chicks in 7 consignments to 470 producers (including 245 women) members of 33 cooperatives in 7 divisions in the North West Region during the implementation of the project dubbed Livestock Fisheries Development Project (LIFIDEP).

807- So, from 2019 to 2023, the rate of women’s access to vocational training significantly improved, exceeding that of men in 5 out of the 10 regions. For example, for the 2022-2023 training year, 63,091 persons were trained, including 32,338 women.

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808- The State carried out actions that sought to reduce the gap existing between men and women by promoting gender equality and non-discrimination in terms of access to justice by women, their participation in the management of public affairs as well as their right to education and training.

CHAPTER 2: PROTECTING WOMEN AGAINST VIOLENCE

809- Cameroon intensified efforts to fight against GBV by adopting several policies to combat the said violence and improve the strategic framework.

Section 1: Evolution of the Strategic Framework (Article 2)

810- The 2022-2026 National Strategy to Combat GBV was developed. It integrates the fight against GBV in development and humanitarian contexts and is focused on the prevention, repression and holistic management of victims/survivors, with the involvement of all stakeholders.

811- The said strategy is accompanied by the National Plan of Action for the elimination of female genital mutilation (FGM) which seeks to build on the initiatives of the State, Parliament, Civil Society, NGOs, community and religious leaders as well as technical and financial partners. Moreover, the terms of reference for local committees fighting against FGM were drawn up to harmonise action on the field. Dissemination of the said Documents was ongoing

812- The drafting and implementation of the National Plan of Action to end child marriages since 2020, based on mobilising families and communities as agents of change and granting access to health, education and justice services, enabled the State to fight against child marriage in the target regions and reduce the number of cases over the years.

813- Furthermore, Circular Letter No. 2/C/MINESEC/CAB of 22 April 2022 to lay down modalities for the management of students’ pregnancies in public and private secondary schools, Circular Letter No. 13/23/C/MINESEC/SG/DPPC/DAJ/DOVAS of 10 November 2023 to strengthen the fight against gender-based violence in school and Circular Letter No. 12/B/1464/L-C/MINEDUB/CAB of 27 November 2023 to lay down measures to protect young girls against GBV in school helped reiterate the respect for the right to education for pregnant young girls by prohibiting their exclusion henceforth from secondary schools.

814- Considering the magnitude of GBV observed during the different humanitarian and security crises in Cameroon, and in a bid to speed up achieving the objectives of the UN Women, Peace and Security Agenda as well as to better address emerging security challenges, the 2nd National Action Plan for Implementation of Resolution 1325 and related Resolutions

was adopted in 2022. One of the innovations of the Plan is the inclusion of a specific pillar relating to promotion which would help disseminate the said plan and make it known across the country. A technical secretariat resulting from the National Action Plan was also set up.

Section 2: Policies to Combat Violence against Women and Girls (Articles 3 and 8)

815- The State concentrated its action on implementing the social and behaviour change communication strategy, training of stakeholders, combating GBV online and other State actions to combat GBV.

§1: Implementing the Social and Behaviour Change Communication Strategy

816- In terms of prevention, the State carried out several actions to implement the social and behaviour change communication strategy (see §810 et seq.)

§2: Continuing the Training of Stakeholders

817- On this point, see §802 et seq.

§3: Combating GBV online

818- On this point, see §695 et seq.

§4: Other Actions by the State to Combat GBV

819- Every year, Cameroon produces a Report on Human Rights with a chapter on women’s rights which indicates measures taken to combat GBV.

820- Every year, MINPROFF grants the sum of CFAF 60,000,000²⁹⁷ to women’s organisations working to prevent and combat GBV. From 2020 to 2024, 97 associations received this support.

821- Furthermore, the launch of the process to develop the Government-Technical and Financial Partners Joint Programme to combat GBV began in 2024. In addition, several platforms combating GBV that brought together various stakeholders were set up and work together to improve the rights of women and girls. A new joint Government and United Nations programme on GBV is being developed.

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822- The protection of women against GBV was notably characterised by the improvement of the strategic framework.

²⁹⁷ About 91,469.41 Euros

CHAPTER 3: PROTECTION OF MARITAL RIGHTS

823- In order to uphold its commitments concerning the rights of women and girls enshrined in the Maputo Protocol, the State launched and undertook diverse actions focused on the minimum age for marriage, registration of marriage and its impact on property, nationality and name, protection of women in polygamous marriages, protection of women in case of termination of marriage and protection of children in the family.

Section 1: Minimum Age for Marriage (Article 6(b))

824- As a reminder, the Penal Code incorporated international and regional instruments including this Protocol as it criminalises, in Section 356, all marriages wherein the spouses are less than 18 years old. In most cases of early marriage, the girl child is the victim. To combat this phenomenon which persists in certain areas, the State carried out actions aiming at taking gender into account in diverse policies, providing assistance to victims (see § 712 et seq), bringing about a change in behaviour and sanctioning.

§1: Promoting Change in Behaviour to Dissuade Early Marriages

825- Concerning awareness raising, as part of the celebration of the International Women's Day and the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence, in 2020, the State together with FAIRMED, students of the DAFI Programme²⁹⁸ and the Girls Leadership Group, organised awareness-raising sessions. A total of 625 persons were enlightened, including 448 women, 117 men and 246 children (128 girls and 118 boys). In the same year, the State also organised campaigns to denounce the atrocities suffered by women in crises areas.

826- In addition, it disseminated operational frameworks for the promotion and protection of the rights of women and young girls, victims of violence such as the Plan of Action to end child marriages which was allocated a budget between 2020 and 2024. Furthermore, advocacy and communication were carried out, urging change of behaviour in order to reduce risks of GBV and promote a favourable socio-cultural environment. For example, a ceremony to denounce child and adolescent sexual exploitation on social media was organised in 2021 by the Regional Delegation of MINPROFF of the Far North Region. The said delegation and the Community Education Animators Network (RESAEC) with support from UNFPA, trained 100 adolescents and young girls on leadership and life skills to raise awareness on the risks of GBV, rape and child marriage.

827- Thanks to the implementation of the project dubbed "Because I am a girl", a campaign to end child marriage was organised by MINPROFF in collaboration with *Plan International Cameroon* in June 2022 for about a hundred women and girls from needy families. In 2022, MINPROFF, MINESEC and MINESUP, with support from partners, organised awareness-raising campaigns in about ten High Schools in the Centre, Littoral, West, North West and South West Regions on "sexual and gender-based violence in schools".

²⁹⁸ This is a higher education scholarship programme funded by the German Government, created in 1992 and aimed at recording a 15% registration rate of refugees towards obtaining a university certificate by 2030.

828- In 2020, Cameroon participated in the African Union Campaign to end child marriage by planning activities in the context of the project Sub-Saharan Africa Women's Empowerment and Demographic Dividend Project (SWEDD) and used the celebration of commemorative days such as the International Women's Day and the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence to engage in activities to dissuade early marriages. In 2023 for example, one of the actions taken was the organisation of 15 round tables and conferences on several themes and organisation of over 200 educational talks which led to the awareness of the population on GBV prevention, its causes and consequences, the importance of civil status registration, the development of positive masculinity, forced marriage, early pregnancies, the role of parents, etc...

829- Furthermore, film screenings and radio programmes in official and local languages were used as tools for raising awareness among thousands of people.

§2: Repression

830- Proceedings were initiated against perpetrators of child marriages and where found guilty, they were sentenced. For example, through Judgment No. 139/COR of 3 November 2020, the Tignère CFI found **S.H.** guilty of attempted forced marriage and **H.M.** guilty of kidnapping of child and sentenced them to 2 years in prison and a fine. In 2021, **M.A.** and **Z.A.F.** were prosecuted before the same court, respectively for attempted forced marriage and for kidnapping of child. **Z.A.F.** was sentenced to 6 months in prison and a fine for kidnapping of child. On the contrary, the court declared **M.A.** not guilty following Judgment No. 65/COR of 13 April 2021.

Section 2: Registration of Marriage and its Impact on Property, Nationality and Name (Article 6 (d, f, g, h, j))

831- Marriages are celebrated and registered pursuant Law No. 2024/016 of 23 December 2024 to organise the Civil Registration system in Cameroon. This official registration has an impact on property, nationality and the name of the spouses.

§1: Impact of Marriage on Property

832- Registration of a marriage determines the regime to be applied and the property rights of the spouses acquired before and during the marriage and depending on whether they chose joint ownership of property or separate ownership of property. In either case, property acquired before the marriage is the personal property of the spouse to whom it belongs. In the context of the separate property regime, in the event of dissolution of marriage, property acquired during the marriage belongs to the person who acquired it. Whereas, under joint ownership regime, all property acquired during the marriage are considered as belonging to both spouses, irrespective of who purchased it.

833- Similarly, in the event of the death of either spouse, the surviving spouse has rights over the joint property. For example, following Judgment No. 689/CIV of 8 July 2019, the court allowed the widow, Ms **L.H.** who had no child with the deceased to benefit from the liquidation

and distribution of the joint property, while the deceased's children could only inherit from the share of their father.

834- In cases of divorce, the Douala-Bonanjo CFI, sitting in matters of customary law, through Judgment No. 13/L of 4 January 2022, dissolved the marriage in favour of the wife and sentenced the husband to pay his wife alimony of CFAF 300,000²⁹⁹ for their three children, CFAF 10,000,000³⁰⁰ as damages and CFAF 3,000,000³⁰¹ as settlement fees for her³⁰².

§2: Impact on Nationality

835- In Cameroon, nationality is mainly governed by Law No. 1968-LF-3 of 11 June 1968 to set up the Cameroon nationality code. Marriage does not result in an automatic change of nationality. Thus, Section 17 allows a foreign woman who marries a Cameroonian to expressly request or decline Cameroon nationality at the time of celebration of the marriage. Pursuant to the same Law, Cameroon nationality is acquired by a legitimate child born of Cameroonian parents or of a Cameroonian father or a Cameroonian mother (Section 7-a), a legitimate child born of a Cameroonian mother and a father of unknown nationality (Section 8), as well as a legitimate child born in Cameroon of foreign parents, where the father or mother was born in Cameroon (Section 11-a).

§3: Impact on Name

836- Law No. 69/LF/3 of 14 June 1969 regulating the use of names, first names and pseudonyms does not oblige a woman to bear the name of her husband. However, she may choose to bear the name of her husband. As provided for in Sections 299 and 311 of the Civil Code, the wife may be authorised to no longer bear the name of her husband or the husband may request that the wife be forbidden to bear his name in case of judicial separation or divorce.

Section 3: Protection of Women in Polygamous Marriages (Article 6 (c))

837- All marriages duly celebrated before a Civil Status Registrar and registered are governed by the law. Cameroon approves both monogamous and polygamous marriages and protects the rights of spouses.

838- In Cameroon, although there is no specific law on women in polygamous marriages, there are provisions concerning married women in general. Thus, the Constitution enshrines the rights of all people, without any discrimination based on sex. In the same way, the Penal Code protects the married woman from of violence, including her eviction from the matrimonial

²⁹⁹ About 458.02 Euros.

³⁰⁰ About 15,267.18 Euros.

³⁰¹ About 4,550.15 Euros.

³⁰² In addition, the Nyong-et-Kelle HC, by Judgment No. 27/cv/TGI of 14 December 2022, dissolved the marriage between spouses B. exclusively against the husband and sentenced him to pay the sum of CFAF 2,000,000 to his ex-wife as damages.

home (Section 358-1). The Civil Code protects the rights of spouses and lays emphasis on the rights of women. First, mention can be made of Section 212 (duty of fidelity, support and assistance), Section 213 to 216 (upkeep, household expenses, consent of the wife to use property...). Moreover, Law No. 2024/16 of 23 December 2024 to organise the civil registration system in Cameroon was adopted. It reiterates the possibility to transcribe customary marriages in the civil register (Sections 49 to 51). This transcription gives the marriage a legal value equal to a civil marriage.

839- Regarding polygamous marriages, law makers sought to lay emphasis on the protection of women through Section 215 (possibility to contest the choice of family residence in case of danger), Section 220 and 223 (right to represent the spouse in the interest of the household and use funds put at their disposal, administer, enjoy and dispose of personal property or reserved property acquired through the exercise of a separate professional activity from that of the husband, to own and manage a bank account, exercise a profession other than that of the husband...).

840- Furthermore, the wife has the possibility to request a divorce from the courts, liquidation of property, custody of children, alimony, damages in case of injury suffered and to be appointed beneficial owner and/or administrator of estate in the event of the death of the husband. Thus, for example, the right of usufruct was granted to women in 4,073 cases between 2020 and 2021. In Judgment No. 172/PD/22 of the Akonolinga CFI, the Judge declared the succession of the deceased opened by recognising the widow as the usufructuary and administrator of property.

Section 4: Protection of Women in Case of Termination of Marriage

841- Protection of the woman in case of divorce and death of her spouse was taken into consideration.

§1: Rights of Women in Case of Divorce

842- Several applications for liquidation of assets were filed by women. In judicial proceedings, the will of courts to protect the rights of women was reflected either in making orders on its own motion for the liquidation of assets in case of dissolution of marriage, or by ordering the spouse at fault to pay damages and granting custody of the children to their mother as well as alimony.

843- For example, the Nde HC, by Judgment No. 01/CIV/TGI/NDE of 23/1/2023 rendered a divorce, holding that the husband was entirely at fault **N.R.** and ordered him to pay the sum of CFAF 100,000³⁰³ as alimony for their 2 children placed under the custody of their mother. The husband was also sentenced by the court to pay his ex-wife the sum of CFAF 1,500,000 FCFA³⁰⁴ as damages for loss suffered.

§2: Interests of Women in case of Death of the Spouse

³⁰³About 152.67 Euros.

³⁰⁴About 2,290.08 Euros.

844- Awareness-raising activities were carried out for widows. For instance, in 2022, during the celebration in Fouban, Douala and Yaounde, of the International Widows' Day, which takes place on 23 June every year, educative talks on the rights of widows were organised for about 4,010 persons. During the same celebration in 2023, MINPROFF, in partnership with the Yaounde 3 Council, organised a ceremony to present the “Widows Legal Guide” published in 2022 in English and French to inform widows of their rights and procedures to follow to claim these rights. Later in 2023, this Guide was translated into other languages such as Pidgin, Ewondo, Fulfude and Ghomala.

845- In addition, about a hundred widows in distress from 7 subdivisions in the city of Yaounde received a pack of basic necessities and psycho-social support was provided especially to those who were victims of violence.

846- Regarding succession, widow’s rights are guaranteed by the judicial system in matters of inheritance. So, some court decisions appoint women as usufructuaries and administrator of estate. To illustrate, in 2020, 2,195 court judgments granted the right of usufruct to widows. In 2022, by Judgment No. 172/PD/22 of the Akonolinga CFI, the Judge declared the estate of the deceased opened by recognising the widow as beneficial owner and administrator of estate. In the same manner, through Judgment No. 194/TPD/2023 of 5 July 2023, the Foubot CFI granted the widow **P.S.** the legal right of usufruct over all the succession estate.

Section 5: Protection of Children in the Family

847- Protection of children in the family was guaranteed through strengthening the normative framework and repression, awareness-raising and capacity-building, as well as alternative care and inheritance rights.

§1: Strengthening the Legal Framework for the Protection of the Child and Repression

848- Cameroon strengthened its legal framework on child protection by adopting Law No. 2023/9 of 25 July 2023 to institute the charter on child online protection in Cameroon. . Perpetrators of acts of violence against children were prosecuted and sanctioned, where found guilty.

849- Judgments were passed to sanction kidnapping, trafficking in persons, murder, assault occasioning death, grievous harm, indecency, unintentional killing, etc. Hence, by Judgment No. 27/CRIM of 20 February 2019, the perpetrator of an act of kidnapping by force of a 2-year-old minor with the aim of getting the parents to pay a ransom was punished with 2 years in prison.

850- In addition, by Judgment No.15/CRIM of 8 May 2022, the Ntem Valley HC sentenced the accused to 20 years in prison for causing the death of 3 children aged between 2 and 3 years. The same accused was sentenced for smuggling of persons by Judgment No. 38/CRIM of 18 June 2021 and Judgment No. 36/CRIM of 11 July 2022 by the Nyong-et-So’o HC to 5 years in prison in each of the judgments. Some statistics for the year 2021 were as follows: concerning

cases of rape, there were 138 minors as victims and 168 persons convicted; for cases of kidnapping of child, there were 141 minors as victims and 45 persons were convicted; for cases of indecency to child under 16, there were 626 minors as victims and some 334 persons convicted.

§2: Awareness Raising and Capacity Building for Stakeholders

851- In 2019, about 57,611 persons, attended educative talks on the fight against marital violence, family and domestic violence. In 2021, MINPROFF organised a denunciation ceremony under the theme: *No to sexual exploitation of children and adolescents and to posting their pictures on social media*, during which the role of parents and local communities were reiterated. Moreover, in order to reflect on strategies to combat violence against children in families, on 6 December 2022, MINJUSTICE gathered members of defence and security forces, social workers and Judicial and Legal Officers for a workshop on family violence against children.

852- In the same way, to guard children against practices that have negative effects on psychological and physical health such as early, FGM breast ironing and other harmful traditional practices, the Committee on cultural, social and family affairs of the National Assembly and MINAS organised an awareness raising workshop in June 2022. In the same year, a toll-free number (116) to facilitate reports on of cases of violence against children was instituted by MINPROFF and UNICEF. They also set up a positive parenting programme which aimed to promote nurturing and protecting approaches towards children in terms of care and support.

§3: Alternative Care

853- Judgments rendered by courts on adoption, delegation of parental authority, guardianship or custody of children took into account the best interest of the child and sometimes their consent, as well as international and regional instruments ratified by Cameroon. Thus, for example, from 2019 to 2022, some 992 applications for adoption were granted (742 to nationals and 250 to foreigners), about 1,022 applications for guardianship were granted (998 to nationals and 24 to foreigners) and applications for adoption of wards of the State led to the registration of 1,177 wards between 2020 and 2022.

§4: Recognition of Succession Rights

854- In case of loss of a parent, courts rendered decisions organising succession and appointing children as rightful claimants and/or administrators of estate without any gender discrimination. Thus, in 2020 for example, 2,595 court judgments recognised the rights of women and girls to inherit. An example is Judgment No. 18/TPD of 27 January 2020 by the TPD of Ambam where the Judge declared the daughter of the deceased coheir and administrator of estate.

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855- Through preventive and repressive measures taken by the State, the fight against early/forced marriages continued. Similarly, the rights of women in marriage, including in polygamous marriages, and in the case of dissolution of marriage were taken into consideration. Furthermore, the impact of the registration of marriages on name, nationality and the property of women are governed by the law.

CHAPTER 4: ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

856- The promotion and protection of economic, social and cultural rights as well as social protection were implemented in Cameroon through measures guaranteeing women's access to employment and preservation of the right to food security, health and adequate housing. Moreover, actions were undertaken to promote women's right to a positive cultural context, right to sustainable development and right to property, access to land and credit.

Section 1: Access to Employment for Women (Article 13)

857- Among priorities defined in the NDS30, women's empowerment has an important place in the process towards becoming an emergent country. In Section 4.5.4 of the NDS30 on the promotion of gender and equity, it is indicated that for the period 2020-2030, Government will: continue its policy of equitable access for girls and boys, men and women to education, training and information; strengthen programmes designed to encourage women and youth entrepreneurship.

858- The legal framework of CFCE was updated in 2024 by Decree No. 2024/2374/PM of 13 June 2024 to lay down the organisation and functioning of the Business Creation Formality Centres and the procedures for creating businesses. The rate of creation of businesses by women in CFCE was on a steady rise. It increased from 25.87% in 2022 to 26.57% in 2023.

859- In the handicraft sector, registers of communal registration offices for artisans show that the percentage of craftswomen registered increased from 34.3% in 2019 to 51.22% in 2021 and 51.38% in 2023. Registration in these registers gives right to the issuance of a craftsman card.

860- Women are also very involved in the social economy mainly through common initiative groups (GIC) and agricultural cooperatives. They were represented in different network management bodies. Out of 7 operational regional social economy networks, 3 are were by women.

861- Furthermore, young girls received multifaceted support from the State within the framework of the "Youth Connekt" initiative to guarantee their socio-economic integration. The State also promoted the involvement of young girls in the management of local affairs through diverse initiatives such as youth municipal councils, young regional councillors and the youth parliament. Gender was also considered for appointment to duty posts in MINJEC. In practice, in a bid to move women from the informal to the formal sector, 38,486 girls and

women were trained between 2019 and 2020 on setting up and managing income generating activities (IGAs).

862- Furthermore, in 2020 in the East and Far North Regions, the State helped women to generate revenue by themselves for their daily needs by providing some 1,267 girls from refugee, internally displaced and host community populations in Bertoua, Mokolo, Mora, Minawao and Ngam with tailoring and small business kits, agricultural equipment, inputs and livestock kits.

863- In the same year, the follow-up of 4 organisations of women farmers which received subsidies granted as part of the implementation of the support programme for gender, climate change and agriculture and the setting up of the related platform also contributed to improving the economic situation of women.

864- Out of 2,944 persons recruited in the public service in 2020, 1,383 were women, comprising 47% of persons recruited.

Section 2: Right to Food Security (Article 15)

865- The State continued its actions towards guaranteeing food security for women.

866- Hence, as part of the Avangane pilot rice farm Project implemented by MINADER in 2021, a cooperative made up of about 300 women received support in terms of rice seed and capacity building on the field.

867- Through other agricultural projects and programmes implemented by the State, women received additional support in diverse forms. The Agriculture Investment and Market Development Project (PIDMA) for example provided the target population, comprising 50% of women and 30% of youth, with financial support through bank partners and support for production, transformation and sale of products derived from cassava, maize and sorghum.

868- In addition, as part of the implementation of the She Trade Outlook Cameroon Project, 650 women from the localities of Ayos, Foumbot, Mbalmayo and Belabo received technical support for cassava transformation in 2023 to improve their capacities to join and access the continental market with value added products such as tapioca and other derivatives.

869- As part of the implementation by MINADER of the Programme for Safety and Integrated Management of Agropastoral Resources in Northern Cameroon, 688 women received equipment and seeds for agro-ecology activities.

870- Moreover, 832 women benefited from the implementation of the Youth Agropastoral Entrepreneurship Promotion Programme (AEP-Youth). They received support from Government amounting to CFAF 249,600,000³⁰⁵.

³⁰⁵About 381,068.70Euros.

Section 3: Right to Health (Article 14)

871- Universal Health Coverage went operational in 2023. Order No. 4081/2023/A/MINSANTE/CAB of 19 June 2023 to lay down the terms and conditions for the implementation of Phase I of the Universal Health Coverage was signed. Pursuant to Article 4 (1), pregnant women, children aged 0-5, new born babies up to 42 days old, persons living with HIV and persons on dialysis are the priority target for phase I of the UHC. Between April 2023 and December 2024, the UHC has covered 10,194 caesarean sections at 95%.

872- Pregnant women received during prenatal consultations were tested for HIV and some women who tested positive were placed on ARV treatment. Long Lasting Insecticide-Treated Mosquito Nets (LLINs) were also distributed free of charge to pregnant women. They equally received intermittent preventive treatment for malaria and free treatment for malaria. Results were obtained from the implementation of the Support Project for Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health (PASMNI). Moreover, the Women-Families Sector Plan against HIV/AIDS and STDs (2021-2026) was developed.

873- The yearly organisation of the AIDS-free holidays campaign led to the sensitisation of girls and boys on the prevention of sexually transmissible infections, especially AIDS.

874- For more details on measures taken concerning women's right to health, see §103 et seq and 294 et seq.

Section 4: Right to Adequate Housing (Article 16)

875- The State took measures to guarantee the right to adequate housing for the population, including women.

876- Regarding developments on general measures aimed at guaranteeing the right to adequate housing, see §471 et seq.

Section 5: Right to a Positive Cultural Context (Article 17)

877- Religious, recreational, cultural and sporting activities contributed to guarantee full development of women. For example, support to Muslim pilgrims, initially reserved for men only was progressively extended to women, the numbers of which increased by 50%, from 3 women in 2012 to 6 in 2022.

878- In Sports, the State continued to involve women in the organisation of sporting activities and supporting them during competitions. To illustrate, 46 women were part of the Organising committee of the 24th African Women's Handball Championship³⁰⁶ 2020, 25 were involved for the 6th edition of the Total African Nations Championship (CHAN), Cameroon 2020³⁰⁷, 39 for

³⁰⁶ The competition took place from 8 to 18 June 2021 in Yaounde.

³⁰⁷ The competition took place from 16 January to 7 February 2021.

the 25th edition of the Women's AfroBasket 2021³⁰⁸ and 24 for the 33rd edition of the 2021 Africa Cup of Nations.

Section 6: Right to Sustainable Development, including the Right to Property, Access to Land and Credit (Article 19)

879- Actions were carried out to promote women's access to land and funding.

§1: The Promotion and Protection of Women's Land Rights

880- The State continued to guarantee access to land for women. Between 2019 and 2021 for example, 3,602 land titles were issued to women following applications for direct registration.

881- In 2024, a total of 4,593 land titles were issued to women.

882- Issues relating to the rights of rural women to land and natural resources were discussed during the land tenure weeks, notably the week of 25 to 29 January 2021 in Yaounde, under the theme: *Local Management of Land in Cameroon: Challenges and Lessons*, where participants were reminded that all citizens have a right to land without distinction as to gender. For other developments, see §471 et seq.

883- Women's rights to access land were also protected before the courts as demonstrated through the following judgments: by Judgment No. 33/2021/TA-YDE of 16 February 2021, the Yaounde Administrative Court cancelled Land Title No. 6613/*Mefou et Afamba* in favour of Mrs **M.T.E.**; by Judgment No. 65/TA/FOND/2021 of 14 December 2021, the Ngaoundere Administrative Court, on the application of Ms **D.F.M.**'s ordered the cancellation of Order No.535/MINDCAF/SG/D2/1300 of the Ministry of State Property, Surveys and Land Tenure in her favour; the Haut-Nkam HC, by Judgment No. 23/CIV/TGI/2023 of 17 May 2023 ordered the separation from joint heirship of Ms **N.D.C.** from an immovable property upon her request, although all the other co-owners, being men, had attempted several times to transfer the property without her consent.

§2: Women's Access to Financing and Support for Female Entrepreneurship

884- The State granted financial support for several female entrepreneurship initiatives in line with its policy of promoting female entrepreneurship. For example, on 18 July 2023, the Minister of the Economy, Planning and Regional Development signed 3 financing agreements with the Head of the European Union Delegation to Cameroon to the tune of CFAF 40,000,000,000³⁰⁹ allocated to the fight against food insecurity, territorial development with the provision of infrastructure and support to the resilience of women in the North West, South West, West and Littoral Regions as part of promoting female entrepreneurship.

³⁰⁸ The competition took place from 18 to 26 September 2021.

³⁰⁹ About 61,068,702.3 Euros.

885- The implementation of the National Project to improve the Production of Vegetable Crops by MINADER helped women benefit from technical, material and financial support. In 2022 for example, 125 women received this support.

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886- In addition to adopting measures to guarantee the rights of women, especially pregnant women to health, the State continued to make efforts to implement the Maputo Protocol by guaranteeing for women, the right to food security, the right to a positive cultural environment, access to employment, land and property. Moreover, women received diverse forms of support geared towards empowering them.

887- The main challenge encountered was insufficient financial resources to face the increasing levels of inflation which also affected women.

CHAPTER 5: RIGHT TO PEACE (ARTICLE 10)

888-Cameroon went through a period marked by political, social, and economic challenges that impacted social cohesion. Various measures taken by the State to promote peace building, particularly through consideration of the role of women in conflict management were supported by the actions of civil society.

Section 1: Consideration of the Role of Women in Conflict Resolution

889- Awareness-raising initiatives and training promoted women's commitment to the defense of peace.

§1 : Awareness Raising on Peace

890- Modules on citizenship, civic responsibility, and Human Rights were introduced into the curricula of primary school pupils, secondary school and university students. A training manual for women mediators for peace and social cohesion was developed and disseminated in 2019. In 2020, brochures on living together, peace and security, and peaceful elections, as well as a training manual for security forces on peaceful elections in line with UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and related resolutions, were developed.

891- As part of the implementation of the National Action Plan for Resolution 1325 and related resolutions mentioned above, the awareness of hundreds of women activists and leaders of women's organisations was raised on their involvement in the peace process and provided skills in managing violence in conflict situations, mediation, conflict resolution, psychosocial support, engagement and citizenship...

892- Taking into account the aspirations and demands of the people, the State prioritised dialogue over confrontation. The holding of the Major National Dialogue is a perfect illustration of this. During consultations preceding the Dialogue and during same, women played important

roles as resource persons, displayed enthusiastic participation, and were able to put forward their proposals for the conflict resolution process and the return to peace.

893- On 13 to 14 July 2023, Cameroon hosted the International Conference to empower Muslim women and youth as peace builders. The conference³¹⁰ focused on the responsibility of religious leaders and traditional chiefs in promoting the rights of women and youth and resulted in the decision to establish a regional network of Islamic legal scholars and African dignitaries for peace, women's empowerment, support for family planning and education.

894- Similarly, a Memorandum of Understanding for the implementation of the project, *Women at the Service of Peace Strengthening the Participation of Women's Organisations in the Implementation and Coordination of the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) Process in Cameroon, Based on the 2021-2025 National Gender Strategy for DDR*, was signed on 6 April 2023, between the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family (MINPROFF), the Ministry of Youth and Civic Education (MINJEC), the National Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Committee (NCDDR), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and UN Women. The project aims to support the NCDDR's work by creating a network of women's associations and organisations, strengthening their DDR capacities, and providing them with technical and financial resources to carry out activities contributing to the DDR process to benefit young people and women. In the same vein, the NCDDR signed a partnership agreement with UN Women on 26 July 2023, for the implementation of a project aimed at training women to discuss topics such as peace building and taking into account women's rights in the disarmament process and their engagement at the community level.

895- Furthermore, the Head of Government toured the South West Region from 22 to 24 September 2021, and the North West Region from 5 to 7 October 2021, to deliver a message of peace. He took the opportunity of these official visits to hold the second meeting of the Committee to Follow up the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Major National Dialogue in Buea, and more broadly, to outline the State's responses to various demands of different groups, as well as all other actions taken to resolve the ongoing security crisis. He called on the population to work towards the functioning of the Presidential Plan for the Reconstruction and Development of the North West and South West Regions, and to encourage their children who had joined armed groups to accept the Head of State's offer of reconciliation by laying down their weapons and joining the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration centers.

§2 : The Training and Involvement of Women in Culture and the Defense of Peace

896- To encourage greater participation of women in the pursuit of peace, the State focused on raising awareness and providing training as regards the culture of peace, as well as training towards recruitment into peacekeeping missions. Regarding the first aspect, the State organised interregional training workshops for hundreds of peer educators, young women peace

³¹⁰ It brought together more than 1,500 persons from all 10 regions of the country and from 19 other countries.

ambassadors, imams and Muslim dignitaries, and women's organisations on the culture of peace, combating intolerance, living together, mediation, and other related topics. Furthermore, defence and security forces personnel were trained in providing psychosocial support to women and girls in humanitarian contexts.

897- Regarding the second aspect, several women were trained on Cameroon's crucial role in participating in United Nations peacekeeping missions and on applying for positions within the UN. Starting in 2020, hundreds of women, including officers, non-commissioned officers, and police officers, were recruited into the contingents of the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), and the Multinational Joint Task Force. Similarly, as part of the deployment of the Defense and Security Forces, women were included in the contingents sent to operational areas in the Northwest, Southwest, and Far North Regions.

Section 2 : The Support of Civil Society in Conflict Resolution

898- Women's groups launched appeals for a return to peace through campaigns and advocacy sessions, ecumenical prayers, public exhortations, and lamentations. For example, hundreds of women gathered on 15 October 2019, under the leadership of the Cameroon Women’s Peace Movement, raising their voices for a return to peace in the North West and South West Regions.

899- Several women's rights organisations³¹¹ participated in the implementation of the National Action Plan for Resolution 1325 and related resolutions. Awareness campaigns on multiculturalism, peacebuilding, social cohesion, non-violence, and combating hate speech and radicalisation were organised, as well as training workshops for women on preventing violent extremism. In addition, peace coalitions were established, such as the South West/ North West Women's Task Force in 2020.

900- Among other actions undertaken in support of peace, were the initiative of the Cameroon Women’s Peace Movement, which, with financial support from the Friedrich Ebert Foundation and technical support from MINPROFF, organised, from 28 to 31 July 2021, the 1st National Women’s Convention for Peace whose aim was to encourage the inclusive participation of women in conflict resolution and the preservation of peace in Cameroon; or the participation of women leaders in the 2nd edition of the African Women for Peace and Development Forum held in Bangui in CAR from 28 to 29 September 2023.

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³¹¹ Such as Women for a Change Cameroon, Reach Out, *Association de Lutte contre les Violences faites aux Femmes*, *Association Camerounaise des Femmes Juristes*, the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom, and Women in Alternative Action.

901- Despite a challenging environment marked by both internal and external factors, , the State, together with its partners, with the aim of restoring social cohesion resolutely recognised the important role of women in the process of building a peaceful society. However, the rise in hate speech and the negative impact of socio-political crises were challenges to the implementation of a culture of peace.

CHAPTER 6: PROTECTION OF WOMEN IN ARMED CONFLICTS (Article 11)

902- Apart from measures to guarantee the protection of women in general and the right to peace and security mentioned above (See § 889 et seq) this Chapter reports on specific actions towards protecting women against activities of non-State armed groups. The actions of the State included strengthening the strategic framework, implementing preventive measures and sanctions against perpetrators of violations.

Section 1: Strengthening the Strategic Framework

903- In addition to all the afore-mentioned strategies, the Gender Strategy of the National Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Committee (2021-2025) was developed. It is based on 3 strategic thrusts: the increased involvement of female ex-combatants and women and girls associated with armed groups in the disarmament process; consideration of the specific needs and interests of female ex-combatants and women and girls associated with armed groups in demobilisation activities and services; and the community, economic, social, political, and security reintegration of female ex-combatants and women and girls associated with armed groups in their communities. The Action Plan for Implementation of Resolution 1325 was also adopted.

Section 2: Implementing Preventive Measures

904- The State built the capacities of some 740 Police Officers, 30 Gendarmes, 60 Judicial and Legal Officers, 60 media professionals, 60 health professionals, 60 social workers in the Far North, the East, the North West and the South West Regions (Regions experiencing conflict) on the protection of women and children in armed conflicts.

905- Moreover, 350 soldiers were trained at the Peacekeeping Operations Training School of Motcheboum on the prevention of gender-based violence including sexual abuse and exploitation before their pre-deployment to the Cameroonian conscript of MINUSCA.

906- The State also took steps to ensure the increased presence of women in processes relating to the provision of aid and humanitarian relief such as distribution and camp management committees, disarmament committees and in humanitarian relief and aid programmes. About one million women were involved between 2020 and 2024.

907- Furthermore, pursuant to the Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative Project funded by the United Nations Peace Building Fund (PBF), the International Organisation for Migration organised 4 capacity-building workshops on DDR, 2 on community planning and the common ground approach, 1 on subsidy mechanisms, 3 on Score card, 2 on the Action

Plan for Implementation of Resolution 1325, 3 on mapping and 4 on strategic planning. It also led to the holding of 12 community dialogue sessions on reconciliation and reintegration as well as 23 coordination meetings. At the end of this project, 25 women's organisations received subsidies. These subsidies were in the form of small grants (income-generating activities, IGAs) implemented in the regions; the total sum amounting to CFAF 125 000 000³¹² which is about USD 208,000. Activities implemented by women's organisations had an impact on 15,854 persons, with 70% being women.

Section 3: Judicial Guarantee of the Protection of Women in Armed Conflicts

908- The courts helped guarantee the protection of women in armed conflicts by sanctioning perpetrators. While the country is not experiencing armed conflict as defined by International Humanitarian Law, some regions are experiencing a security crisis. The courts worked to protect women and in the context of restoring public order in these crisis-affected areas. As an illustration, in the proceedings against Lieutenant Commander **F.E.**, Sergeant **B.C.H.**, and Privates First Class **D.G.B.**, **T.C.J.B.**, and **N.F.G.L.**, who were implicated in the murder of two women and two children in Zeleved, Mayo Moskota Subdivision, Far North Region of Cameroon, in 2015, the Yaounde Military Tribunal rendered its judgment on 21 September 2020. The first four accused were sentenced to an imprisonment term of 10 years for violating orders, capital murder, and complicity, while the last was sentenced to an imprisonment term of 2 years for violating orders. The Legal department appealed against the judgment.

909- Regarding the events that occurred in Ngarbuh, Ntumbaw village of the Northwest Region, on 14 February 2020, members of the security forces, accompanied by members of a Mbororo vigilance committee, responded to a separatist attack during a patrol in the Ngarbuh neighborhood. During this operation, non-combatant civilians, including 3 women and 10 children, were killed in the crossfire. The investigation ordered by the President of the Republic led to the prosecution of the suspects before the Yaounde Military Tribunal. The proceedings were ongoing.

910- In all, consideration of women in the process of conflict resolution, restoration and consolidation of peace significantly evolved. However, the punishment of perpetrators of violations still needs improvement.

CHAPTER 7: RIGHTS OF VULNERABLE GROUPS OF WOMEN ENJOYING SPECIAL PROTECTION (Articles 22 to 24)

911- Several actions were carried out to enable persons with disabilities or older persons, including women to enjoy their civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. Thus, in 2022, 118,333 persons with disabilities including women had access to health care, education,

³¹² About 190,839.7 Euros

training in agro-pastoral fields and financial support to facilitate their socio-economic integration. This included 9,965 older persons including 6,192 women.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

912- This Report highlighted actions undertaken by Cameroon to guarantee the protection of the rights of women and girls and the resulting economic consequences. The State continued to ensure enjoyment of the rights of women and girls by carrying out several actions towards gender equality and non-discrimination, combating GBV, protecting women's rights in marriage, their social and cultural rights, their participation in the process of peace and their protection in armed conflicts.

913- These efforts encountered some challenges such as budget constraints, harmful practices and insufficient financial resources for some women.

PART C: CAMEROON'S 1ST, 2ND AND 3RD REPORTS UNDER THE KAMPALA CONVENTION

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

914- Progress made with respect to the Kampala Convention shall focus on assessing the implementation of recommendations relating thereto by the Commission on the one hand and implementing the Kampala Convention itself on the other hand.

SUB PART I: IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS RELATING TO THE KAMPALA CONVENTION

915- In Cameroon, insecurity caused by *Boko Haram* attacks in the Far North Region, the crises in the South West and North West Regions, inter-community conflicts and natural disasters were the main causes of massive displacement of people to other parts of the country. On 31 December 2024, a total of 1 036 775 internally displaced persons (IDPs) was recorded.

916- Moreover, within the same period, Cameroon was home to 438 422 refugees and 13 298 asylum seekers mainly coming from the Central African Republic (75%) and Nigeria (24%).

917- An assessment of the implementation of the Convention shall focus on recommendations of the Commission relating to the presentation of the Report, protection from internal displacement and assistance, collaboration with international partners, sustainable solutions, compensation for IDPs and their access to documentation.

Section 1: Regular Presentation of the Report of Cameroon (Article 3)

918- This Report is in line with Article 14 (4) of the Kampala Convention. Cameroon's Initial Report which gave an account of the implementation of the provisions of the Convention on the protection of the rights of IDPs covered the period 2013-2017, including activities carried out in 2018. In continuation of this exercise, Cameroon, in its traditional inclusive approach, prepared this Report for the period 2019-2024.

Section 2: Protection from Internal Displacement and Assistance (Articles 4, 5, 7 and 9)

919- Diverse initiatives were taken to guarantee the protection of IDPs in accordance with the Convention and to assist them with regard to their vulnerable situation, especially in times of crises. These initiatives included the adoption of a law on civil protection, responding to civil protection contingencies, providing financial support and continued assistance to internally displaced IDPs, their participation in relevant programmes, and their registration. Reflections on the adoption of a comprehensive law to implement the Kampala Convention were ongoing.

§1: Adoption of an All-encompassing Law to Implement the Kampala Convention (Rec 73, art 4)

920- Reflections on the issue were ongoing and it is in this context that MINJUSTICE in collaboration with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees organised in Douala on 12 and 13 December 2023, a workshop on the domestication of the African Union Convention on the Protection and Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons in Africa.

§2: Strengthening the General Framework for Civil Protection in Cameroon

(Rec 73, art 4)

921- Law No. 2024/15 of 23 December 2024 governing civil protection in Cameroon was adopted. This law lays down rules relating to the prevention of risk and management of disasters and humanitarian crises, while guaranteeing safety and protection of people, property and the environment, before, during and after disaster. MINAT is in charge of formulating and implementing the national civil protection policy.

§3: Framework for the Response to of Civil Protection Requirements and Contingencies (Rec 73, art 4)

922- Law No. 2024/6 of 24 July 2024 to authorise the President of the Republic to proceed with Cameroon's accession to the United Nations Conventions relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and on the reduction of Statelessness was adopted.

923- At the strategic level, diverse initiatives were adopted to ensure civil protection of the people. Thus, a Plan for the Reconstruction of the Far North Region was adopted on 26 September 2021 with its major thrusts being reconstruction, infrastructure development, support to socio-economic activities and climate change adaptation. Similarly, to respond to the needs of refugees, internally displaced persons and host populations for assistance in the Adamawa, East and Far North Regions, a Humanitarian Response Plan for 2017 - 2020 was developed.

924- For the North West and South West Regions, an Emergency Humanitarian Assistance Plan was set up (2018 - 2019, extended to December 2022) followed by the creation of the Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Centre in charge of the implementation and follow up of the Plan. Moreover, a reconstruction and development plan for the said regions was established by Order No. 31/CAB/PM of 3 April 2020.

925- With a view to ensuring better access by refugees, asylum seekers and potential stateless persons to solutions guaranteeing protection, safety, dignity and better living conditions, including during their return to their usual places of residence, the (2018 - 2020) Multi-Year and Multi-Partner Strategy was set up.

926- In April 2024, the humanitarian community launched a humanitarian response plan for 2024 in support of the action of the Government of Cameroon. The said plan requires funds from diverse humanitarian partners and donors evaluated at 371 400 000 dollars to support about 2.3 million vulnerable persons suffering from the impact of the Lake Chad Basin conflict,

the crises in the North West and South West Regions, the influx of Central African refugees, epidemics and climate shocks. Priority sectors to be covered by this plan include shelter, education, health, protection, nutrition, food health, water, hygiene and sanitation.

927- Since 2023, a module on “the law on statelessness and nationality” was included in the initial training curriculum at the National School of Local Administration (NASLA) in Buea by Decree No. 2020/111 of 2 March 2020 on the establishment, organisation and functioning of NASLA. This was in line with one of the commitments taken by Cameroon in October 2019 in Geneva, during the High-Level Segment on Statelessness which consisted in introducing a course on citizenship and statelessness into the curriculum of the School. Discussions were ongoing for a wider dissemination of the course to RLAs in charge of civil status in Cameroon and those in border areas. The goal is to equip the competent personnel in charge of civil status Registration such as birth certificates, in order to prevent and limit cases of statelessness.

§4: Funding and Continuous Assistance to IDPs (Rec 74, art 5)

928- Funding for the implementation of the afore-mentioned Emergency Humanitarian Assistance Plan was evaluated at CFAF 12 716 500 000³¹³ to be obtained from Government subventions and a call for international and national solidarity as well as from the diaspora. Expenses relating to the functioning of the facility coordinating this plan shall be borne by the State budget. Concerning the Plan for the reconstruction and development of the afore-mentioned North West and South West Regions, a provisional budget evaluated at CFAF 89 682 938 100³¹⁴ was prepared in 2020 for 2 years and for the implementation of the Plan in 2020, an allocation of CFAF 36 321 000 000³¹⁵ was adopted by the Steering Committee. Regarding the Plan for the reconstruction of the Far North Region, its implementation from the first quarter of 2021 required a budget of about CFAF 150 000 000 000³¹⁶, that is CFAF 5 000 000 000³¹⁷ from the public investment budget and CFAF 14 000 000 000³¹⁸ from external funding. For additional information on this issue, see §654 .

§5: Participation of IDPs in the Assessment of Programmes (Rec 74, art 5/Rec 76, art 7)

929- Forcibly displaced persons were involved in programmes that concern them. This was done through awareness-raising projects and activities carried out to encourage their participation in prevention, mitigation of the risk of violence, fight against sexual exploitation and abuse, education on hygiene and sanitation, income-generating activities, etc. For example, in 2020, 177 awareness raising campaigns on prevention and response to gender-based sexual violence were organised with the support of the HCR in the North West and South West Regions impacting 20 726 IDPs. In 2022, 1 468 IDPs from the Far North Region were trained

³¹³About 19,414,503.82 Euros.

³¹⁴ About 136,920,516.18 Euros.

³¹⁵ This allocation was meant for the construction/reconstruction of 60 schools and 25 health centres in the North West, 45 schools and 20 health centres in the South West, 155 water holes equipped with solar-systems and the rehabilitation of 1000 plantation hectares in the North West and 700 hectares in the South West.

³¹⁶About 229,007,633.58 Euros.

³¹⁷ About 7,633,587.78 Euros.

³¹⁸ About 21,374,045.80 Euros.

on roles and responsibilities of protecting IDPs on the sites and on strengthening complaint and feedback mechanisms.

930- With the same objective of involving beneficiaries in local initiatives and in defence of their rights, refugee committees were created within the Councils in Cameroon, beginning with Yaounde and Douala councils in 2021. These committees are headed by refugees.

§6: The setting up of an Automatic Registration System for Displaced Persons with Disaggregated data to Facilitate Family reunions (Rec 81, art 9)

931- Cameroon takes note of this recommendation.

Section 3: Collaboration with International Partners (Article 6)

932- In order to guarantee respect for the rights of IDPs living on Cameroon soil, initiatives launched by the State were consolidated. State action was also supported by international partners³¹⁹.

§1: Support by the State's Partners (Rec 75, art 6)

933- Support from development partners in the implementation of Government policy takes various forms such as awareness-raising or capacity building actions carried out for technical stakeholders as well as donations, financial support and diverse forms of assistance for the target population, who are IDPs. These actions undertaken in sectors such as health, education, food, behavioural change, documentation, empowerment and subsistence, legal assistance, just to name these, continued and increased yearly. For example, in 2020 in Koza, Plan International distributed foodstuff and non-food products to 108 internally displaced families and in the Mayo-Sava, Mayo-Tsanaga and Logone-and-Chari Divisions, they awarded cash assistance for food to several persons, about 14 433 IDPs on the one hand, and provided support for livelihood through the asset creation project of the World Food Programme in partnership with the Lutheran World Federation and INTERSOS, on the other hand. In 2020, in the North West and South West Regions, FAO provided support for the creation of 6 community initiative groups, that is, three in each Region for 143 persons from vulnerable communities such as IDPs to enable them meet their needs through start-ups or by developing RGAs.

934- Regarding other actions undertaken by these partners to provide assistance to IDPs, see **§927 et seq.**

§2: Consolidation of Launched Initiatives (Rec 75, art 6)

935- Cooperation agreements were signed in several areas between the Government and its partners and projects were undertaken for a given period. For example, the agreement signed on 10 March 2023, between the Central Bureau of Census and Population Studies in Cameroon

³¹⁹ HCR, Plan Cameroon, ICRC, Action against Hunger, INTERSOS, WFP, IRC, Norwegian Refugee Council, etc.

(BUCREP), and the HCR, for a qualitative study on the risks of statelessness and on technical, financial and material assistance of HCR to carry out the 4th General Census of Population and Housing; the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government (MINDDEVEL) and the HCR on 7 March 2024 for the socio-economic inclusion of IDPs in local and regional development plans; the signing of the MINSANTE-HCR Framework Agreement in 2021 allowing for a 30% reduction of costs of care for refugees, etc.

936- The afore-mentioned (2018-2020) Multi-Year and Multi-Partner Strategy, renewed for 2022-2026 and officially presented on 20 March 2024 was initiated to provide combined coordinated action between the government, humanitarian, civil society, community and IDPs stakeholders, in favour of IDPs.

Section 4: Lasting Solutions (Article 11)

937- Initiatives towards achieving lasting solutions to the problems of IDPs included continuous plans for their voluntary return, and national support to assist IDPs.

§1: Continuation of Procedures for Voluntary Return (Rec 84, art 11)

938- The plans for the reconstruction of crises regions coupled with measures taken by defence forces to reinstate peace and government measures to mitigate natural disasters and develop affected areas helped ensure that every year, IDPs were returning to their residences. For more details, see §986 et seq.

§2: Budgeting for Actions to Assist IDPs (Rec 84, art 11)

939- See information in §928 et seq

Section 5: Compensation of IDPs and their Access to Documentation (Articles 12 and 13)

940- The legal framework for compensation of IDPs and the strengthening of the system for registration and document for IDPs were considered.

§1: Legal Framework Governing Compensation of IDPs (Rec 85, art 12)

941- Law No. 2024/15 of 23 December 2024 governing civil protection in Cameroon, in its sections 45 and 46, regulates care for and assistance to victims of natural disasters. This care is psychological, social and cultural, and includes aspects such as education, finding a new job, health, socio-economic reintegration, safety, etc.

§2: Strengthening the IDPs Registration System and Issuing Birth Certificates (Rec 86, art13)

942- From 2023, the Government carried out consultative activities to diagnose the civil status and identification landscape in Cameroon. This initiative, carried out in collaboration with the World Bank, involved a legal and an institutional analysis of the civil status landscape

as well as an assessment of results. The objective was to modernise civil status in Cameroon, in particular by digitalising the civil status system which was under review and to respond more effectively to the demand for civil status registration on the one hand and obtain an increasing and a sufficient supply with a better system on the other hand. During this study, community teams went to the East Region for a survey and to get statistics on the need for national identity cards and birth certificates. Moreover, collaboration with courts facilitated the issuance of several declaratory judgments of births during assizes. In 2023, for example, in the Far North Region, Plan International Cameroon facilitated the issuance of 82 birth certificates, 38 of which were for internally displaced children in the Mayo-Tsanaga as well as Logone-and-Chari Divisions.

943- Despite the numerous challenges Cameroon faced for several years, such as the massive and constant increase of refugees on its territory, different security crises with devastating consequences in the Far North, North West and South West Regions and insufficiency of available resources to tackle these challenges, the State, with support from its partners, left no stone unturned in its efforts to guarantee the well-being and respect for the rights of IDPs.

SUB PART II: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE KAMPALA CONVENTION

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

944- During the period under review, actions were taken in the interest of IDPs in terms of preventing internal displacement, protecting IDPs and assisting or adopting lasting solutions for them.

CHAPTER 1: PREVENTING INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT (Article 4)

945- In Order to prevent internal displacement, the main option chosen by the Government was peaceful solutions mostly geared toward consensus measures, some of which have resulted in key recommendations that were gradually being implemented. Moreover, other actions which aimed at restoring peace, security and social cohesion in the crisis-stricken regions, mainly in the North West and South West, were undertaken.

Section1: Adopting Measures that Advocate for Peace

946- Among measures adopted to ensure a gradual restoration of peace are the setting up of an Emergency Humanitarian Assistance Plan³²⁰ for the North West and South West Regions and discontinuation of criminal proceedings in 2019 against 333 persons arrested and detained for offences committed in these regions. Similarly, the Major National Dialogue, convened by the Head of State, held from 30 September to 4 October 2019 to provide responses to the concerns of the People of Cameroon including those of the afore-mentioned Regions. The goal of these responses was national unity and living-together and they were translated into recommendations which were being implemented progressively.

Section 2: Implementing Recommendations from the Major National Dialogue

947- Some recommendations adopted concerning internal displacement include:

- strengthening the autonomy of RLAs (see §110);
- adoption of Law No. 2019/019 of 24 December 2019 on the promotion of official languages in Cameroon. This responds to the recommendation to ensure equal usage of English and French within the Government Departments and public institutions as well as in the publication of legislative and regulatory instruments of a general nature or all types of advertisements. It also aims to encourage Cameroonians to speak both languages;
- development of reconstruction plans for the crisis areas. On the one hand, there is the Presidential Plan for the Reconstruction and Development of the North West and South West Regions through Order No. 031/CAB/Pm of 3 April 2020³²¹, which also created a steering Committee and regional follow-up committees with the outcome of the latter being a relative return to calm and renewed trust among the population. On the other

³²⁰ Set up on 20 June 2018.

³²¹ This Plan has 3 objectives namely to consolidate national unity and social cohesion; rehabilitate basic infrastructure and revamp the local economy; improve the living conditions of the population of the Regions concerned.

hand, in 2021, the Special Programme for the Reconstruction of the Far North Region, which aims among other things, to repair damages caused by *Boko Haram* and floods, reduce social vulnerability, strengthen resilience of the population to climate change, governance. Concerning the funds allocated for this programme, **see §659**.

Section 3: Adopting Additional Measures for Peace and Social Harmony

948- In an effort to specifically fight against hate speech and tribalism, the State proceeded to adopt Law No.2019/020 of 24 December 2019 to amend and supplement some provisions of the Penal Code relating thereto, in order to eradicate hate speech and extend the concept of contempt of race or religion to the offence of contempt of tribe or ethnicity and increase penalties. In a similar manner, on 24 May 2022, the National Commission for the Promotion of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism launched a platform “coalition for the fight against hate speech and xenophobia” through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with 14 civil society organisations. As concerns security issues, **see §644**.

949- As concerns economic recovery, the 3 crises regions were declared to be in an economic disaster situation by Decree No. 2019/3179/PM of 2 September 2019. The benefit of this measure was the exemption of new investment ventures in these Regions from a category of taxes. Moreover, in 2019, Cameroon received support of CFAF 8 500 000 000³²² from the United Nations Peace building Fund (PBF). These funds were earmarked for actions relating to disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration as well as promotion of bilingualism. In 2020, through Order No. 046/CAB/Pm of 8 May 2020 on the establishment, organisation and functioning of the Steering Committee for projects executed with the PBF, an institution was created to manage these funds.

950- Arresting and prosecuting perpetrators of insurgency or terrorists were also dissuasive options to avoid crises and consequently, internal displacement. The adoption of these measures combined, including those mentioned in the section on the implementation of recommendations relating to the Kampala Convention (**See§946**), made it possible to recreate a favourable environment for the return of people to their usual places of residence. Based on information provided by MINAT, by end of 2024, 658 544 persons had returned.

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951- The Government undertook to carry out initiatives towards restoring peace in the crises areas and began implementing them. Similarly, the Government continued its efforts to support and defend the rights of internally displaced persons by ongoing crises and disasters.

CHAPTER 2: PROTECTION OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (Articles 9, 12 and 13)

³²²About 12,977,099.24 Euros.

952- Free from discrimination, measures taken to guarantee the protection of IDPs focused on the one hand on their civil and political rights and on the other hand on their economic, social and cultural rights.

Section 1: Protection of Civil and Political Rights

953- This protection was assured through registration, documentation and participation in the management of public affairs, as well as guaranteeing both the right to family life and the right to life, physical integrity and security.

§ 1: Right to Family Life

954- In addition to actions relating to the protection of the family, (§563 et seq), administrative authorities, civil society organisations and international organisations invested in finding and reuniting families separated during their displacement in order to restore families. Actions relating to the right to peace and security in the localities where the security crises caused internal displacement (§643et seq) and measures taken to encourage the voluntary return of IDPs to their localities of origin (§984 et seq) are all geared towards restoring families.

§ 2: Right to Life, Physical Integrity and Security

955- Like everyone under the jurisdiction of Cameroon, IDPs, including women, benefited from measures relating to the guarantee of the right to life, physical integrity, security, safety and free movement (§120 et seq, §136 et seq, §149 et seq, §218 et seq and §809-821.

§ 3: Registration, Documentation and Participation in the Management of Public Affairs

956- Initiatives relating to birth registration (§577 et seq and 958 et seq.) and access to official documentation (death certificate, national identity card, passport, etc.) were applicable to IDPs. Some specific measures taken include, the Circular-Letter No. 000382/LC/K/IGSR of 4 May 2021 relating to the reconstitution and establishment of civil status registration documents in localities affected by the war against *Boko Haram* or floods in the Far North Region through administrative procedures. This Circular Letter particularly targeted IDPs settled in the Mayo-Tsanaga, Mayo-Sava, Mayo-Danay as well as Logone-and-Chari Divisions.

957- Mention can also be made of the reconstitution (in July 2022) of 800 official personal documents under the Presidential Plan for the Reconstruction and Development of the North West and South west Regions (evaluation made in July 2022), the drawing up of 1 000 birth certificates for children of IDPs in July 2022 following inter-community conflicts in December 2021 in the Logone-and-Chari Division or the reconstitution and issuance of 400 birth certificates to IDPs on 24 April 2024 in Bertoua.

958- To further facilitate registration of civil status documents beyond the prescribed time limits, including those of IDPs, Law No. 2024/16 of 23 December 2024 to organise the Civil Status Registration System in Cameroon, in addition to cases of war, armed conflict and natural disaster, extended the reconstitution through administrative procedures to cover “any other

serious emergency” (Section 56). Provision has also been made for judicial reconstitution in such situations (Section 57).

959- Moreover, registration of IDPs was specifically for those staying temporarily in camps and as for participation in the management of public affairs, measures taken were applicable to them (**§228 et seq and §733 et seq**).

Section 2: Protection of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

960- In addition to initiatives related to compensation, despite financial constraints and on behalf of IDPs, the State of Cameroon, sought to guarantee the right to food, water and sanitation, health, education and other social services, the right to property and housing.

§ 1: Compensation Measures

961- To repair damages resulting from actions of public or private persons, it was important for IDPs to use the remedies available under administrative litigation, civil proceedings or criminal proceedings. Moreover, following the Major National Dialogue which held from 30 September to 4 October 2019 in Yaounde, recommendation was made, as part of the reconstruction and development of crises-affected areas, for “*compensation for losses suffered by private individuals, religious congregations, Chiefs’ Palaces, communities, private production units and service provision units losses as well as direct social assistance schemes for victims*”.

§ 2: Right to Food, Water and Sanitation, Health, Education and other Social Services

962- The afore-mentioned measures **see §360 et seq, 495,933, 535,928 941 and 987**) are pertinent as concerns IDPs. In addition to these measures, they received diverse support such as foodstuff (See **§ 933, 978 et seq and 993**).

963- Thanks to actions by the State of Cameroon, a good number of IDPs were placed in the educational system. For example, during the 2021-2022 academic year, at the secondary level particularly general and technical education, 28 469 IDPs were registered, that is 15 390 girls and 13 079 boys.

964- As concerns health, with the support of the UNFPA, sexual and reproductive health kits were regularly provided to internally displaced women and made available at health facilities, including: Kit 1: condoms, Kit 2: clean delivery kits, Kit 3: Post Rape Care, Kit 4: Oral and injectable contraceptives, Kit 5: treatment for sexually transmitted infections (STIs), Kit 6: medicated delivery, Kit 7: Intra-uterine device, kit 8: care for miscarriage and complications from abortions, kit 9: suturing of tears (vagina and cervix), vaginal control check-up, Kit 10: Delivery vacuum, Kit 11: Caesarean, obstetrical surgery and other obstetrical complications and Kit 12: and blood transfusion.

§ 3: Right to Property and Housing

965- Besides actions promoting the right to property and housing, (**§ 97, §266 et seq, §471 et seq**), police measures were applicable to IDPs both in their locality of origin and in their host

locality. Reports to authorities about trespass on their properties led to judicial investigations and where necessary to proceedings and penalties. They were also free to initiate civil action.

966- As regards housing, almost all IDPs were placed in communities, and the camps, where applicable, were only temporary solutions. As such, in 2021, emergency shelters were constructed on the sites given by traditional rulers for IDPs following inter community clashes between the Massa/Mousgoum and the Arabs Choa in the Logone-and-Chari Division. Similarly, for victims of floods caused by heavy rainfall which fell from August to October 2022 in the Far North Region, the State constructed temporary resettlement sites for some of these persons in the towns of Kousseri (28 700) and Goré (6 354).

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967- In a nutshell, the State of Cameroon made efforts to protect several rights of IDPs while guaranteeing their right to integrity and freedom among others and striving to provide for their essential needs notably in terms of basic social services. The major challenge faced was financial constraints.

CHAPITRE 3: ASSISTANCE TO INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS AND DURABLE SOLUTIONS

968- The displacement of persons generated a need for humanitarian assistance to which the State responded with the support of its partners. The response was based on the duty to assist while ensuring compliance with humanitarian principles. This was done with a view of achieving sustainable solutions to internal displacement.

Section 1: Implementing the Duty to provide Humanitarian Assistance

969- Measures were taken to assist internally displaced persons mostly based on adopted plans and mechanisms to consult Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), estimate and monitor assistance needs of IDPs were available

§ 1: Measures taken to Assist Internally Displaced Persons: Articles 3 (g), 4 (3), 5 (2-6)

970- The Cameroon Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) 2017-2020, the Presidential Plan for the Reconstruction and Development (PPRD) of the North West and South West Regions, the Special Program for the Reconstruction and Development of the Far-North Region (PSRDREN) continued to be implemented to assist IDPs.

971- The State assisted by its partners provided assistance to IDPs, comprising among others emergency shelters. Furthermore, shelters and Non-Food Items (NFIs) were provided to 93,509 people about 33.8% of the targeted affected population (276,620 persons) in four regions

between 2023-2024. Also, cash assistance within this period reached 12,517 persons to respond to their basic needs. This assistance was provided in the form of multi-purpose cash to vulnerable persons, IDPs and host community individuals, including victims of gender-based violence, (women, and girls). All these enabled them to build resilience, access basic social services such as medical and legal care.

972- In addition, 2,250 households of 11,796 persons received cash grants to kick-start income-generating activities (IGA) and support the creation of joint economic initiatives. Some 2,041 households of 12,204 persons received cash for shelter and 4018 household of 24,507 persons received cash for core relief items to improve their living conditions.

973- As regards education, IDP pupils and students were admitted into schools without having to present birth certificates. During the academic year 2023/2024, some 17,393 students (including IDPs) received cash for education to pursue their studies. These IDPs also received assistance for the establishment of civil status documents, for example, to ease the establishment of civil status documents, Circular Letter No. 000382/LC/IGSR³²³ of 4 May 2024 was issued by the Governor of the Far North Region relating to the reconstitution/establishment of civil status documents by way of administrative acts in some localities of the Far-North hit by terrorist acts of Boko Haram insurgences, floods or as a result of climate change.

974- Moreover, the Centre for the Coordination of Emergency Humanitarian Assistance in the North West and South West Regions, placed under the authority of the Minister in charge of Territorial Administration created by Order No 2018/127/CAB/PM of 21 November 2018 continued to be functional.

§ 2: Mechanisms to Consult IDPs, Estimate and Monitor Assistance Needs of IDPs: Articles 5 (5) and 9

975- With the adoption of Law No 2024/015 of 23 December governing Civil Protection in Cameroon was created and charged with the responsibilities among others, to consult IDPs, estimate, consult and monitor assistance needs of IDPs. Formally, this task was assigned to the Department of Civil Protection in the Ministry of Territorial Administration.

976- The Department of Civil Protection does not directly do consultations, instead she relies and exploits information and statistics forwarded to her by administrative authorities and the Co-ordinators of the Humanitarian Centres. Also, that it is during the provision of assistance to IDPs relating to the gifts available that a quasi-type of collaboration/consultation is made by the administrative authorities and the Coordinators of the Centres with regard to vulnerable persons.

977- The estimation of monitoring, consulting and assessment of assistance needs of IDPs is also carried out by humanitarian partners for instance the HCR, IRC, UN-OCHA who publish

³²³ This circular specified that only IDPs settled in the Far-North region (Mayo Tsanaga, Mayo Sava, Logone and Chari and Mayo Danay) were eligible.

annual Humanitarian Needs Overview Reports which includes analysis on the humanitarian situation of IDPs.

§ 3: Rapid and non-discriminatory Assistance: Article 9 (2)

978- During the period under review, several entities continued to provide rapid and non-discriminatory assistance to IDPs. Some of these adopted the rapid response approach which ensures that assistance is delivered rapidly and without discrimination. Also, there is the emergency shelters and food items approach which seeks to address the immediate basic needs of IDPs relating to housing and basic supplies.

979- No act of discrimination is allowed during the distribution of assistance to IDPs; however, consideration is given to persons with disabilities, pregnant women, older persons as well children not accompanied by their parents. Thirdly, there is the food and nutritional security approach which focuses on improving food security by enhancing the economic livelihood of IDPs.

980- Furthermore, to uphold the principle of rapid and non-discriminatory assistance, Government, humanitarian organisations and other international and national partners continued to work to gather and share critical information on displacement and corresponding needs.

981- In this vein, MINAT provided assistance to IDPs in various forms. By way of illustration, rice, laundry soap, cash, fish, tents, vegetable oil, sleeping mats, sugar were provided in the localities of Dschang (28 August 2019) Bamenda (27 December 2019), Yaounde (12 December 2020) Bafoussam (2021) and in the Far-North (Mayo-Danay, Diamare, Mayo-Tsanaga and Logone and Chari in 2022 and in November 2024). This assistance is often carried out in accordance with the various lists from the Humanitarian Emergency Coordination Centres that comprises the names, sex and ages of the IDPs.

§ 4: Assistance taking into account Persons with Special Needs (Article. 9.2)

982- Assistance to IDPs took into consideration persons with special needs like nursing mothers, victims of GBV, older persons, children as well as persons with disabilities. They were provided items such as milk, baby kits, and beddings. Prenatal care as well as special care for older persons was also provided.

Section 2: Measures taken to ensure Compliance by Humanitarian Actors, Article 6

983- Humanitarian actors were called upon to make sure they comply with international and national laws with a view to respect the rights of IDPs in the deployment of their activities.

Section 3: Sustainable Solutions (Article 11 (5))

984- Durable solutions relating to the assistance to IDPs does not depend only on the cause of displacement of persons. It also depends on persistence and recovery measures for the eventual resettlement of IDPs in their host communities or places of origin.

985- While working to address the root causes of displacements due to conflict, Government organised the Major National Dialogue (MND) that held from 30 September 2019 to 4 October 2019. The MND addressed causes of internal displacement and proposed measures for the eventual return of the affected population to their places of origin. Some of the measures contained in the recommendations of the MND concerning IDPs were the construction of decent homes to encourage displaced persons to return to their places of origin, grant general amnesty to foster the return of IDPs, carrying out a physical headcount of all IDPs in order to estimate their basic needs as well as provide resettlement and reintegration kits to them.

986- The recommendations of the MND of 2019 relating to IDPs saw the creation of the PPRD (3 April 2020) for the North West and South West regions and PSRDEREN (24 May 2022) in the Far North Region. Both Plans aimed to rehabilitate and develop basic infrastructures, revitalise the economy, promote social cohesion as well as rejuvenate the socio-economic situations of these regions to encourage the return of IDPs.

987- To support the livelihood of IDPs and encourage them to return to their places of origin during the year 2022, more than 800 lost official documents reconstituted, nearly 20 centres and 30 schools rehabilitated accommodating more than 7,000 pupils and students (including IDPs) working equipment provided to more than 2,400 farmers and fisher men, 19 water supply systems built serving more than 170,000 persons (including IDPs); 120 start-ups financed and support provided to 47 cooperatives, 5 Community Credit Unions rehabilitated with some Greenhouses built amongst others.

988- To further demonstrate the wish to see that lasting peace is restored in the crises affected regions, Government continued its efforts to ensure peace and security. For more on the mechanisms put in place to achieve peace (**see § 643 et seq and 895 et seq**).

989- Actions by Government and its partners towards the return, integration and resettlement of IDPs included the rehabilitation of some public agro-industrial companies (eg CDC, PAMOL, UNVDA, SEMRY, SODECOTON) that served as a source of employment to internally displaced persons. Moreover, measures taken by Government towards durable solutions led to the return and integration of IDPs in their places of origin. Hence, as of 30 June 2022 in the Far-North region, some 15000 internally displaced persons (including 4000 refugees from Chad) returned to their places of origin, notably in Logone and Chari, Mayo Sava, Mayo Tsanaga, Mayo Danay.

990- It is estimated that since 2019 to December 2024, some 658,544 Internally Displaced Persons have so far returned.

991- Also, between 2019 and 2024, many humanitarian agencies have adopted strategic documents including assistance measures directed to IDPs. For instance, the Multi-Year and

Multi-Partner Strategic Plan 2022-2026 and the Protection Sector Strategy Cameroon 2024-2026.

992- In addition to the actions prescribed by Article 2 of the Decree establishing the Centre for the Coordination of Emergency Humanitarian Assistance in the North West and South West Regions, it shall also have as mission, to conduct a census of IDPs as well as their needs, evaluate the lost incurred, elaborate and provide an assistance register of all victims (including IDPs).

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993- Concerned with assisting IDPs and adopting sustainable solutions for their benefit, the State, supported by its partners, deployed a range of normative, strategic, and operational measures. In addition to adopting Law No. 2024/015 of 23 December 2024 governing civil protection in Cameroon, it strove to provide IDPs with basic social services such as education, healthcare, housing, and food. One of the challenges remained the insufficient financial resources needed to assist IDPs and implement sustainable solutions.

994-One of the challenges remained the insufficiency of the financial resources needed to assist IDPs and to implement sustainable solutions. /-

GENERAL CONCLUSION

995-The government took preventive measures to preserve peace and social harmony, which resulted in a relative lull and the return of IDPs to their more secure places of residence. In addition, with the support of development partners, a range of civil, social, economic, cultural and protection initiatives were carried out for the benefit of IDPs, and multi-faceted assistance including sustainable solutions was provided. These efforts are ongoing, and with more funding available, the rights of IDPs could be better guaranteed.

PART D: CAMEROON'S INITIAL PERIODIC REPORT UNDER THE PROTOCOL ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN AFRICA

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

996- The State guaranteed the civil and political rights of persons with disabilities as well as enhanced the socio-economic and cultural rights of this vulnerable persons. It further upheld the principles of accessibility, adaptation, re-adaptation and cross cutting issues and specific rights as well as protection in emergency situations, supporting them to perform their duties and carried out campaigns on statistics and cooperation with development partners was step up for the betterment of the rights of these persons. The duties of persons with disabilities were also taken into account.

CHAPTER 1: CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHT

997- Civil and political rights of persons with disabilities are guaranteed through strengthening the legal and institutional frameworks, equality before the law, fair trial, protection of their physical integrity and not to be subjected to ill treatment, security, freedom of expression, participation in the management of public affairs and freely living within the community and their families.

Section 1: The Normative, Institutional and Strategic Framework on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (article 4)

998- The legal, institutional and strategic frameworks for the protection of persons with disabilities was strengthened and measures taken to protect their civil and political rights as well as their economic, social and cultural rights.

999- The normative framework was strengthened following the ratification of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Africa on 28 December 2021, through Decrees No.2021/751 of 28 December 2021, and with the signing by the Prime Minister of Order No.40/PM of 19 May 2022 to lay down terms and conditions for granting age exemption to persons with disabilities during competitive examinations and recruitment into public service. The Order lays down terms and conditions for granting age exemption such as proof of vocational, school or university training and holder of a national disability card, the effective opening of an administrative competitive examination or recruitment into the public service and can only be granted for a maximum of 5 years above the age limit provided for by the competition or recruitment. Cameroon also ratified the Marrakech Treaty, which facilitates access to published Works for visually impaired persons and persons with print disabilities. At the level of the institution, the Cardinal Paul Emile Leger National Centre for the Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities (NRCPD) was reorganized par Decree N°2019/145 of 20 March 2019. The Maroua Rehabilitation Centre for Persons with Disabilities went operational in 2023 with the completion of construction.

1000- At the strategy level, the National Development Strategy 2020-2030 (SND30) in Chapter 4(Capital Human Development and Wellbeing), 4.4 (Social Protection), Government emphasises on consolidating the achievements and broaden the scope of social protection to the greatest number, by integrating gradually all social categories until now on the fringes of the system, through the reduction of social inequalities, protective measures against all forms of vulnerability, cohesion and social inclusion.

1001- In addition, MINAS on 27 November 2023 presented a Working Guide titled “the National Strategy Document on Community-Based Rehabilitation for Inclusive Development in Cameroon 2024-2029”. The said Document which strengthens the legal and institutional framework for the promotion and protection of persons with disabilities is a compass which makes it possible to harmonise on a national scale, the response of actors to plural needs of persons living with disabilities in terms of health, education, means of subsistence or even empowerment according to a coherent framework.

Section 2: Non Discrimination and Equality before the Law (article 5)

1002- The State protects all without distinction as stated in the Preamble of the Constitution. State Policy is social inclusion and equality before the Law for all its citizens, hence there is no discrimination. Thus persons with disabilities have equal rights before the court and not discriminated against. The Law also provides for the granting of legal aid for indigent persons. For an example of a judgment sanctioning discrimination, See §1027.

Section 3: The Right to life, the Right to Physical and Moral Integrity, and the Right not to be subjected to Torture. (article 8)

1003- Persons with disabilities like all citizens are protected by the law against the violation to physical and moral integrity and against torture. Moreover, those in charge with the application of the law, benefit from initial and in-service trainings which are usually carried out for them. For example, in 2021, during the months of July, September and December, the Ministry of Justice with the support of the United Nations Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa and UNICEF organised capacity building workshops for judicial personnel and penitential staff on International Human Rights Laws and International Humanitarian Law in Yaounde, Buea, Maroua and Bafoussam. Other workshops were on gender based violence with the support of UN Women, where some 110 civilians and military Judicial and Legal Officers participated. Besides, on 30 April 2021 National Mechanism for the Prevention of Torture (NMPT) became operational with the commissioning of the Sub-Committee for the Prevention of Torture within the Cameroon Human Rights Commission (CHRC).

Section 4: Right to Liberty and Security (article 9)

1004- Like everyone else in Cameroon, persons with disabilities are guaranteed the right to liberty and security by Cameroonian law including the Penal Code and violations thereof are punishable, Persons with disabilities may only be deprived of their liberty for reasons and in accordance with the procedures laid down by law.

1005- Moreover, person with disabilities illegally detained can receive redress including seizing the courts or applying to the Commission for Compensation of Victims of Illegal Detention at the Supreme Court of Cameroon.

Section 5: Right to Access Justice (article 13)

1006- Persons with disabilities have access to the courts and fair trial, their rights are also guaranteed. For more details, see §1046 et seq.

Section 6: Right to the Freedom of opinion, Expression and information (article 23)

1007- As per the Preamble of the Constitution there is “the freedom of communication, of expression, of the press, of assembly, of association, and of trade unionism”, thus, Persons with disabilities like all citizens have the right to freedom of opinion and expression as guaranteed by the constitution and the 1990 liberty Laws in Cameroon. Persons with disabilities head Associations of persons with disabilities and political parties such as Platform Inclusive Society for Persons with Disabilities and a political party created and managed by persons with disabilities is the *Alliance démocratique des handicapées et sympathisants du Cameroun*.

1008- Furthermore, with the support of *club des journalistes politiques au Cameroun*, a political cafe on electoral inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities in political and public life in Cameroon was organised on 30 September 2022 in Yaounde.

Section 7: The Right to live in the Community and the Right to a Family (articles 14 and 26)

1009- As per the Preamble of the Constitution “every person shall have the right to settle in any place and to move about freely...” thus the right of persons with disabilities to live in any community with their families is guaranteed by the constitution.

Section 8: Right to Participation in Political and Public Life (article 23 et 21)

1010- To guarantee the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all walks of life, Government and Sight Savers 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 regions³²⁴ with the involvement of local actors, covers citizenship and political participation, and inclusive education. 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.

1011- Concerning the management of public affairs, persons with disabilities held posts of responsibility. For example, the Deputy Manager of the Cardinal Paul Emile LEGER National Centre for the Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities, Yaounde is a disabled person or

³²⁴ (Adamawa, Centre, East, Far North, North, Littoral, South and West)

person with a disability. Persons with disabilities are included in the electoral process in Cameroon. 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. 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.

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1012- The State took measures to guarantee the legal and institutional frameworks for persons with disabilities as well as enhancing their civil and political rights as enshrined in the constitution.

CHAPTER 2: ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

1013- With a view to optimally realising the rights of persons with disabilities and harmonising the response of various stakeholders to their diverse needs nationwide, actions were taken to ensure the right to education, health, culture and work.

Section 1: Right to Education (Article 16)

1014- The normative framework relating to the education of persons with disabilities evolved and access to education was ensured. Moreover, the violation of their rights was sanctioned by courts.

§1: Developments in the Legal Framework relating to the Education of Persons with Disabilities

1015- By Decree No. 2021/250 of 27 April 2021, the State ratified the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons who are Blind, Visually Impaired or otherwise Print Disabled. This treaty facilitates production and international distribution of books in formats specially adapted for blind persons or persons with visual impairment.

1016- In addition, MINESEC issued Circular No. 19/21/LC/MINESEC/IGE/IP-OVS/SVS of 16 November 2021 to repeal and supplement some provisions relating to the consideration of disability and vulnerability in Government technical, vocational secondary schools and teacher training colleges in Cameroon.

1017- Furthermore, Article 3(2) of Decree No. 2018/233/PM of 26 July 2018 to lay down the terms and conditions for the application of Law No. 2010/2 of 13 April 2010 on the protection and promotion of persons with disabilities provides that disability is not, in any case, a reason

for refusing the admission or registration of a student in a conventional institution or training centre.

1018- Article 9 (1) of the aforementioned Decree states that Indigent persons with disabilities receive support for education and vocational training, including total or partial exemption from school and tuition fees, the granting of scholarships, the granting of subsidies for the purchase of didactic equipment for the teaching of persons with disabilities with special educational needs.” As per Article 9 (2), assistance referred to in paragraph 1 above extends to pupils and students born to indigent parents with disabilities.

§2: Access to Education for Persons with Disabilities

1019- With a view to facilitating the integration of persons with disabilities into the Cameroonian education system, a partnership agreement was signed on 4 May 2018 between the Ministry of Secondary Education and the NGO Sightsavers. This partnership agreement covered, among other things, the training of teachers in Government Teachers Training College (GTTC) and Government Technical Teachers Training College (GTTTC) in inclusive education.

1020- In addition, a number of initiatives were taken to limit the number of children with disabilities not attending school in order to achieve the 4th SDG. For example, on 27 April 2022 in Yaounde, the government launched “We ring the Bell” awareness-raising campaign for families and communities, under the theme: Leave no child with disabilities behind in education”.

1021- In 2021, MINAS also carried out consultations with MINEDUB and MINESEC, as well as technical and financial partners (*Cameroon Baptist Convention Health Services (CBCHS)* and *Sightsavers Cameroon*) to improve education for children with disabilities in schools.

1022- In the same year, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the CBCHS and the Cameroon General Certificate of Education Board with the aim of supporting candidates living with disabilities in the GCE and other end-of-year examinations.

1023- In the same vein, the *Association Handicapés Dynamiques du Cameroun* launched a programme dubbed “Handi Education” in 2022³²⁵, with the aim of increasing the school enrolment rate of children with disabilities or children of parents with disabilities.

1024- Thanks to these initiatives, a number of children with disabilities were enrolled in school. For instance, during the 2021/2022 school year, statistics for primary education revealed that 6,897 children with disabilities (18.7% with a hearing impairment, 51.4% with a motor impairment and 29.9% with a visual impairment) attended school. In general, technical and vocational secondary schools, both public and private, 4,238 pupils with disabilities were enrolled, including 2,151 girls and 2,087 boys. During the 2022/2023 school year, 952 children

325 This programme was designed to provide some twenty schools with favourable conditions for the education of pupils with disabilities, offer 300 pupils with disabilities teaching materials and a training, and equip 4 schools or institutions with special needs with appropriate teaching materials.

with disabilities (475 girls/477 boys), compared with 667 the previous year, wrote the *Certificat d'Etudes Primaires*, 79 the *Brevet d'Etudes du Premier Cycle*, 67 the *Probatoire* and 46 the *Baccalauréat*. Similarly, the number of children with disabilities attending the Cardinal Paul Emile Léger Rehabilitation Centre for Persons with Disabilities in Yaounde rose from 180 in 2020 to 254 in 2023.

1025- In addition, to ensure the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all areas of life, the Government and Sightsavers Cameroon launched the inclusive education programme dubbed “A Better World” in 2023. This programme, which will be implemented over 5 years in 8 regions³²⁶ with the participation of local stakeholders, covers inclusive education, citizenship and political participation. The programme will provide sustainable, high-quality inclusive education to children with disabilities, and local stakeholders will work to ensure the participation of persons with disabilities in the political life of the nation.

1026- By 2023, there were 68 inclusive public schools in Cameroon, including one of the oldest, the Specialised School for children with a hearing impairment, with 200 pupils aged 3 to 8 and a teacher training college. For further developments on inclusive education, see **§593 et seq.**

§3: Sanctioning Violations of the Right to Education

1027- The courts helped to protect the right to education of persons with disabilities. Therefore, for not granting the age exemption to **N.I.G.**, with a mental disability due to generalised epilepsy which destroyed 60% of his intellectual abilities, which was in violation of the law, the State, especially the Ministry of Secondary Education was held liable by the Littoral Administrative Court in its Judgment N° 011/QD/2020 of 16 January 2020, and ordered to pay the sum of CFAF 12,000,000³²⁷ as compensation for the damage suffered.

Section 2: Right to Health (Article 17)

1028- Persons with disabilities have access to functional devices and accessories, as well as specialised care that meets their needs within their communities. For example, through the Cardinal Paul Emile LEGER National Centre for the Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities (CNRPH), the following results were recorded for the year 2024: 977 orthoses manufactured; 13 upper limb prostheses; 77 lower limb prostheses.

1029- As part of the Cameroon Clubfoot Care Project (CCCP) in collaboration with MINSANTE, 91 teachers from nursing and midwifery schools took part in a workshop held on 3 and 4 July 2024 in Yaounde, under the theme of “Early detection and care of children clubfoot”. Participants acquired skills in diagnosing and treating clubfoot.

326 Adamawa, Centre, East, Far North, North, Littoral, South and West.
327 About 18,320.61 Euros.

1030- An agreement was signed between MINAS and the FAIRMED Foundation, with a view to guaranteeing these persons access to health services and care for a period of 5 years³²⁸. Awareness-raising campaigns were also organised for persons with disabilities, such as the 5 June 2022 MINAS campaign on early detection and rehabilitation of persons exposed to all forms of disability.

1031- In addition, in partnership with the CBCHS, the State, through MINAS, launched the “Rehabilitation for Inclusion” project in 2021. This project aimed to improve access to quality rehabilitation services for children, young people and adults with disabilities through the training of physiotherapists, occupational therapists and social workers specialised in rehabilitation in Cameroon.

1032- From 2014 when the CCCP was launched, to 2023, training and refresher courses to strengthen the capacity of physiotherapists contributed to the successful treatment of more than 2,500 children with clubfoot in Cameroon.

1033- In addition, to prevent the spread of Covid-19 among persons with disabilities, anti-Covid-19 kits (51,496 mufflers and 7,516 hand sanitizers), as well as 6,000 buckets and soap, were distributed to organisations of persons with disabilities.

Section 3: Right to Work (Article 19)

1034- The aforementioned Decree No. 2018/233/PM of 26 July 2018 provides in Article 8 that “persons with disabilities benefit from learning a profession suited to their physical or mental condition”. Article 14 (2) states that disability cannot be a reason for rejecting the candidacy of a job seeker or for discrimination after recruitment.

1035- Order No. 40/PM of 19 May 2022 to lay down terms and conditions for granting age exemption to persons with disabilities during competitive examinations and recruitment into public service was signed³²⁹. In order to benefit from age exemption, persons with disabilities must prove that they have completed vocational, school or university training and that they are holders of a National Disability Card (article 2).

Section 4: Right to Culture (Article 25)

1036- The State continually invested in the organisation of sports, cultural and recreational activities for persons with disabilities.

1037- The International Day of Persons with Disabilities, commemorated on 3 December each year, is an opportunity for persons with disabilities to showcase their talents in a number of

328 FAIRMED will integrate persons with disabilities into communities and into MINAS departments to obtain technical assistance or information useful to its mission.

329 Age exemption shall be granted only if the post is compatible with the nature of disability (article 3(3)), that compatibility shall be determined by a Decision of MINAS (article 3 (4)). Wrong reference in French, it's (3 (4)) instead of (4).

areas, including handicrafts, painting and the manufacture of clothing, shoes and bags using local materials.

1038- Persons with disabilities took part in numerous sports activities at both national and international level. Cameroon took part in the 2024 Paralympic Summer Games in Paris, France, from 28 August to 8 September 2024, with 5 athletes in 3 disciplines among which athletics (2), powerlifting (1) and taekwondo (2).

1039- Cameroon also has a national team for persons with visual impairment, known as Cecifoot, which regularly takes part in international competitions.

1040- At the national level, 15 athletes with disabilities took part in the 15th edition of the FENASCO B Games in disciplines such as the 1,000 m race, badminton and handball.

1041- At the international level, athletes with physical disabilities and with visual impairment took part in the 13th FAZZA International Para Athletics Championship from 17 to 23 March 2022 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, where athletes with visual impairment won 2 medals. Similarly, at the Open African Powerlifting Championship held in Cairo, Egypt, from 27 to 30 October 2022, athletes with physical disabilities won 4 medals. As regards boxing, 7 medals were won at the Zone 3 Championships for men and women, held in the Democratic Republic of Congo from 3 to 10 April 2022.

1042- They also take part in the National Physical Education Days. The 11th edition, held in 2019 under the theme “The practice of physical education: a major asset for social cohesion”, was special as it focused on persons with disabilities.

1043- Also, on 23 and 24 September 2019, during the celebration of the 2nd International Sign Language Day under the theme “Access to sign language in the education sector and public services: issues, challenges and prospects”, the *Organisation camerounaise pour le développement des sourds* –(Cameroon Organisation for the Development of the Deaf (OCDS)) organised a national symposium on sign language. The symposium focused on difficulties encountered by the deaf in the fields of education, transport and security, health, culture, the media, communication and justice. Among solutions proposed was the upgrading of sign language in order to afford it equal treatment with English and French in the education sector, particularly from primary to university level.

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1044- Through actions taken by the State, the promotion and protection of the economic, social and cultural rights of persons with disabilities was ensured, especially the rights to work, education, health and culture. In the education sector for example, progress was made in terms of legislation, and persons with disabilities were recruited among teaching staff in the Yaounde and Maroua teacher training colleges.

1045- Challenges remain, particularly with regard to financial and material resources earmarked for the education and training of persons with disabilities.

CHAPTER 3: ACCESSIBILITY, HABILITATION AND REHABILITATION (articles 15 and 18)

1046- In accordance with the promise enshrined in the sustainable development programme: “leave no one behind” and the Protocol to the ACHPR on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Africa, Cameroon is committed to promoting and taking into account an inclusive approach to disability in all areas of public life for the benefit of persons with disabilities. In the same vein, Decree No. 2018/233/PM of 26 July 2018 to lay down the terms and conditions for the application of Law No. 2010/2 of 13 April 2010 on the protection and promotion of persons with disabilities promotes the integration of concerns relating to, among other things, the accessibility of persons with disabilities to education and vocational training (Articles 3, 4, 6 to 12), employment (Articles 13 to 17), infrastructure, housing, transport and communication (Articles 18, 19 and 20); access to and participation in political, sports, artistic, cultural and leisure activities (Articles 23 and 24); medical care and facilities such as the granting of a disability allowance for indigent persons with disabilities whose permanent impairment incapacity rate is at least 95% and whose state of health requires constant medical supervision and care (Articles 26, 27, 28, 29 and 30).

1047- In the field of education, for example, initiatives were taken to facilitate accessibility and integration of persons with disabilities or those born of parents with disabilities in schools, universities and vocational training institutions. The State mandates that disability be taken into account in the construction of public buildings by providing passageways to facilitate access for persons with disabilities. This was respected as concerns the Yaounde and Douala judicial complexes under construction, which integrated accessibility for persons with reduced motor skills by installing lifts and creating a 6% access ramp on the ground floor.

1048- In addition, the government, through the Ministry of Public Works (MINTP), established standards to be incorporated into the construction of public buildings to facilitate accessibility for wheelchair-users. These standards specify the width of doors for persons with reduced motor skills or visual impairments, and stipulate the availability of an elevator or a lift and the dimensions of an access ramp for these persons, a guidance strip to avoid obstacles, evacuation exits in the event of fire, sanitary facilities on the ground floor of buildings with specific features to facilitate their access and use. These standards were already being implemented in the construction of public buildings such as the National Institute of Statistics, the Directorate General of Taxation and those under construction in the Prime Minister's Office and the MINTP head office building.

1049- In a bid to facilitate their habilitation or rehabilitation, specific devices and equipment for various disabilities were made available and measures taken to make possible the production and distribution of documents in formats specifically adapted for person with disabilities, especially for those with visual impairment. This equipment includes, inter alia, computers with voice synthesis, braille, flatbed scanners, embossers, punching machines, staplers and drills.

1050- The National Committee for the Rehabilitation and Socio-Economic Reintegration of Persons with Disabilities (CONRHA) holds annual meetings to monitor projects and

programmes for persons with disabilities. During these meetings, progress is assessed, that relating to the strengthening of legal and institutional framework for the protection of persons with disabilities. Also, multi-sectoral prospects to implement the State's policy on the protection of persons with disabilities are highlighted.

1051- With the support of partners such as UNCHR-CA and UNFPA, among others, a platform for organisations working to defend the rights of persons with disabilities in the Centre Region was set up on 9 March 2023 in Yaounde. It aims to promote the inclusion of disability in Cameroon and better inclusion of persons with disabilities into society. Platforms were set up in other Regions, except for the North West and South West Regions.

1052- As regards inclusive education, refer to the section on civil and political rights of persons with disabilities in the charter.

1053- Similarly, access to quality rehabilitation health services for persons with disabilities is ongoing through the “Rehabilitation for Inclusion” project set up in 2021 by the Government in partnership with the Cameroon Baptist Convention Health Services. Physiotherapists, occupational therapists and social workers specialised in rehabilitation in Cameroon were trained through this project which intends to extend to the training of specialists in major universities.

1054- In terms of infrastructure, the National Centre for the Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities, the Rehabilitation Institute for the Blind in Buea, set up by Decree No. 80/380 of 13 September 1980, and the production centre for women with disabilities “*Bobine d’or*” in Yaoundé were modernised. In addition, the Maroua Rehabilitation Centre for Persons with Disabilities, set up by Decree No. 2020/632 of 19 October 2020, became operational in 2023. The project to computerise the disability card continued.

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1055- The State took steps to ensure the inclusion of persons with disabilities in various areas of life and to facilitate their access to public buildings. Furthermore, appropriate equipment were provided and structures set up for their rehabilitation.

**CHAPTER 4: PROTECTION OF SPECIFIC GROUPS OF PERSONS WITH
DISABILITIES (ARTICLES 27, 28, 29 AND 30)**

1056- Several actions were taken to enable persons with disabilities, including women and girls, young people and children, as well as older persons, to enjoy their civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. As a result, in 2022, 118,333 persons with disabilities, including 7,780 girls/women, had access to healthcare, education, training in agro-pastoral trades and financial support for their socio-economic integration. The same was true for 9,965

older people, including 6,192 women. In addition, 6,904 birth certificates were issued on the initiative of MINAS for 3,618 girls and 3,286 boys.

CHAPTER 5: CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

1057- The protection of specific categories of persons with disabilities (women and young people, children and older persons) is addressed in a dedicated section of the Report. See §1056

CHAPTER 6: PROTECTION IN RISK SITUATIONS (ARTICLE 12)

1058- Cameroon is not in a situation of armed conflict within the meaning of international law. This obligation is further developed in the implementation of the ACHPR's articles. See §121 and 888.

CHAPTER 7: THE DUTIES OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (ARTICLE 31)

1059- The Preamble of the Constitution states that “all persons shall have equal rights and obligations. The state shall provide all its citizens with the conditions necessary for their development”. Thus, persons with disabilities have rights and duties and the State gives the necessary assistance and support required by persons with disabilities to perform their duties. As regards the duty to vote, the State through MINAS on 27 September 2022 sought ways for more participation of persons with disabilities in the electoral process, this was through an audience granted by the Minister of Social Affairs to officials of the election management body (Elections Cameroon). During the 2020 elections, assistance and support was given such as providing accessibility for persons with disabilities into the pooling stations and voting materials for disability persons especially the visually impaired.

CHAPTER 8: STATISTICS, DATA AND OTHER SURVEYS (ARTICLE 32)

1060- Applicable, inter alia, to information relating to individuals, including persons with disabilities, the normative and strategic framework on statistical activities evolved. In addition, statistics including disability were collected, analysed, stored and disseminated, in particular by the National Institute of Statistics (NIS).

Section 1: Evolution of the Normative and Strategic Framework on Statistical Activities

1061- On 20 July 2020, Law No. 2020/10 to regulate statistical activities in Cameroon was passed, repealing previous contrary provisions, including those of Law No. 91/023 of 16 December 1991 relating to statistical censuses and surveys. This new instrument lays down basic principles for the production of official statistics, ethical rules, institutional framework for statistical production and procedures for coordinating statistical activity.

1062- In line with the core principles of official statistics adopted by the United Nations General Assembly and the provisions of the African Charter on Statistics, this law incorporates new instruments such as the National Development Strategy of Statistics (NDSS30), the National Statistical Information System and the statistical visa. On this last point, any statistical study at the national or regional level, except internal administrative work requiring the collection of information from natural persons or corporate bodies, is now subject to approval

by the Minister of the Economy, Planning and Regional Development. Decree No. 2021/690 of 2 December 2021 lays down the terms and conditions for applying this law.

1063- During its 2nd extraordinary session held on 15 April 2021, the National Statistics Council, chaired by the aforementioned Minister, reviewed and adopted the NDSS30 Action Plan, which is based on the NDS30.

Section 2: Collecting, Analysing, Storing and Disseminating Statistics on Disability

1064- Despite financial and other constraints, the NSI produced statistics in the form of indicators, notes, reports, evaluations, directories, yearbooks, surveys and others, some of which have included disability. These statistics covered themes such as living conditions, demography, economy, business, industry and inflation. Available at: <https://ins-cameroun.cm/statistiques/>, these statistics relating, among other things, to malaria indicators in Cameroon, changes in household final consumer prices, Cameroon household surveys, inflation trends, the socio-economic impact of Covid-19 on household living conditions in Cameroon and the availability of contraceptives as well as essential maternal health commodities at service delivery points in Cameroon. These statistics were also related to employment, gender, gender-based violence, family planning and the use of reproductive health services.

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1065- In addition to the adoption of Law No. 2020/10 governing statistical activity in Cameroon, the State, notably through the NIS, took into account disability in the collection, analysis, storage and dissemination of statistical data. The major challenge was the lack of financial resources to cover such operations.

CHAPTER 9: COOPERATION (ARTICLE 38)

1066- In addition to the participation of persons with disabilities in the implementation and monitoring of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Africa, measures taken involved international, continental, sub-regional and bilateral cooperation.

Section 1: Participation of Persons with Disabilities in the Implementation and Monitoring of the Protocol

1067- CSOs working for the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities contributed to the drafting and validation of this Initial Report under the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Africa. In addition to

Reports by MINJUSTICE on Human Rights in Cameroon in 2022 (par. 975 et seq.) and in 2023 (937 et seq.) which contain sections on the rights of persons with disabilities, these CSOs also contributed with regard to Report by Cameroon under the 4th cycle of the UPR which also contains such sections (par. 134 et seq.)

Section 2: International, Continental, Sub-regional and Bilateral Cooperation

1068- With a view to building capacity on disability issues, in particular, as recommended by the Protocol, through the sharing of research, technical, human and financial resources, information and best practices, Cameroon endeavoured to cooperate with various entities through MINAS. Within this framework, MINAS signed a several agreements. It signed with the Fairmed Foundation a partnership agreement (15 June 2022), the aim of which is to improve the living conditions of persons with disabilities and vulnerable indigenous populations; with the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco (30 June 2022) a technical cooperation agreement in the social field, relating to the promotion of, among others, the rights of persons with disabilities; with the Inclusive Society for Persons with disabilities Platform (8 June 2023), a partnership agreement aimed at improving the living conditions of persons with disabilities; with the World Food Programme (22 March 2024), a collaboration framework aimed at strengthening the social protection of vulnerable persons through the setting up of an integrated assistance system; with Care International (19 July 2024), a memorandum of understanding aimed in particular at facilitating access by vulnerable people, including persons with disabilities, to basic social services, etc.

1069- Furthermore, initiatives undertaken by MINAS in favour of persons with disabilities, in whole or in part, received support from international partners. This is the case with the Project to support the strengthening of the rights of persons with disabilities, accessibility, inclusive services and non-discrimination in Cameroon, which led to the handing over of 3,000 copies of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on 27 May 2024.

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1070- Through their dedicated CSOs, persons with disabilities participated at various activities in the implementation and monitoring of the Protocol on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Africa. Through MINAS, among others, the State of Cameroon undertook, under this Protocol, to cooperate at the international, continental, sub-regional and bilateral levels, in terms of sharing research, technical, human and financial resources, information and best practices

GENERAL CONCLUSION

1071- The State took measures to guarantee the rights of persons with disabilities during the reference period especially civil and political rights, socio-economic and cultural rights by

upholding freedom of expression, access to justice and participation in the management of public affairs. The security of these vulnerable persons was also ensured.

1072- In addition, the Government adopted norms relating to disability in the construction of public buildings for easy accessibility for persons with disabilities. Equally, the legal and institutional frameworks on persons with disabilities were strengthened through the signing by the Prime Minister of Order No.40/PM of 19 May 2022 to lay down terms and conditions for granting age exemption to persons with disabilities for competitive examinations and recruitment into the public service as per the 2010 Law relating to the promotion and protection of persons with disabilities, while new rehabilitation centres went operational as at December 2023 (the Maroua Rehabilitation Centre for Persons with Disabilities) and others renovated.

1073- Inclusive education for this vulnerable group was also stepped up with the support of financial partners. Also, Government assisted and supported these persons in performing their duties, such as the duty to vote, for which access to polling stations was provided for them.

1074- Statistics, data and other survey on disabilities were carried by the State through the National Institute for statistic.

1075- Also, the State carried out cooperation through MINAS, with international partners to enhance issues of disabilities especially in terms of building the capacity of persons and organisations of persons with disabilities.

PART E: INITIAL REPORT UNDER THE PROTOCOL TO THE AFRICAN CHARTER ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS ON THE RIGHTS OF OLDER PERSONS

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1076- Cameroon took part in the drafting and the adoption on 31 January 2016 in Addis Ababa of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the rights of older persons, which it later ratified through Decree No. 2021/752 of 28 December 2021 and deposited instruments of ratification on 8 September 2023. Pursuant to Article 45 of the Constitution which provides that international treaties and agreements shall override national laws, this Protocol is directly applicable and is supra legislative norm. Article 22 of the Protocol requires State Parties to submit a periodic Report on measures undertaken for its implementation. This is the rationale for this Initial Report.

1077- To provide some context, in 2020³³⁰, older persons, who were mostly based in rural areas, represented 4.89% of Cameroon's population. In terms of economic vulnerability, 45.7% and 39.6% of older persons lived in moderate vulnerability and severe vulnerability respectively, with vulnerability being higher among women.

1078- In fact, protection of the rights of older persons is a long-standing concern of the State of Cameroon, which by the way enshrined this protection in its Constitution, the Preamble of which affirms "*The Nation shall ... protect ... the elderly*". This requirement of the Constitution is supported by a normative, institutional and strategic framework.

1079- At the normative level, Cameroon ratified several Conventions comprising provisions that expressly requires the protection of older persons, such as the ACHPR (Article 18-4), the Maputo Protocol (Article 22) and the Protocol to the ACHPR on the rights of persons with disabilities in Africa (Article 30).

1080- At the domestic level, Cameroon legislation has instruments that organise the social protection of older persons notably through cash allowance and life annuity paid to retirees by the State or by NSIF. These instruments, which are available online³³¹, provide for the right to retirement benefits in the public as well as the private sector. One of the oldest instruments on the retirement pension is Law No. 69/LF/18 of 10 November 1969 to institute an insurance scheme for old-age and incapacity pensions as well as death benefits³³², which marked the birth of pensions concerning older persons in Cameroon.

³³⁰National Social Protection Policy in Cameroon (2020-2030), para. 41, 72 and 73.

³³¹ https://www.minfopra.gov.cm/recueil/liquidation_%20des_%20droits_%20et_%20pensions.html
<https://www.cnps.cm/images/parutions/recueiltextesbasecnps2021.pdf>

³³²As amended by Law No. 84/7 of 4 July 1984, amended and supplemented by Law No. 90/63 of 19 December 1990.

1081- Moreover, penal laws sanction any behaviour that may undermine the well-being of older persons. This is the case with Law No. 2016/7 of 12 July 2016 relating to the Penal Code which sanctions desertion of incapable and assault on ascendant (Section 282 and 351). On its part, civil legislation protects older persons notably by granting ascendants who are in need the right to maintenance by their children, sons- and daughters-in-law (Section 205 and 206 of the Civil Code).

1082- To ensure consistency in actions to protect older persons, the Cameroon adopted strategic documents such as:

- The National Social Protection Policy in Cameroon (2020-2030)³³³. This Policy, which considers older persons to be vulnerable persons in need of social protection, hinges on 4 strategic thrusts which are cash transfers, social insurance, social action services and support for economic integration of vulnerable persons;
- The National Action Plan for the Protection and Promotion of Older Persons in Cameroon (2019-2023), is structured around 5 major strategic thrusts, namely health and well-being, participation, improvement of the living environment, favourable and protective environment, and research on ageing.

1083- In order to implement its policy on the protection of older persons, Cameroon set up several institutions. MINAS which is at the forefront, is responsible, pursuant to Decree No. 2017/383 of 18 July 2017 to organise MINAS for the elaboration and implementation of the policy of the Government of Cameroon on the prevention, assistance and protection of socially vulnerable persons, including older persons. As such, it supports older persons and has a Department for the social protection of persons with disabilities and older persons³³⁴. Moreover, most Government s have a service in charge of salaries and pensions/, the intervention of which is mainly needed, by older persons as far as pension is concerned, .

1084- Alongside MINAS which is the general coordinating body, some institutions are in charge of specific categories of older persons such as the National Office for Veterans, Former Military Personnel and Victims of War of Cameroon (ONACAM) set up by Decree No. 2001/195 of 25 July 2001 and the Secretariat of State for Defence in charge of Ex-Servicemen and War victims, the organisation and functioning of which is laid down by Decree No. 2012/387 of 14 September 2012. As an Administrative Public Establishment, ONACAM has as main mission to watch over the material and moral interests of ex-servicemen, ex-military

³³³ <https://minepat.gov.cm/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Strategie-Services-sociaux-et-PNPS-Francais.pdf>

³³⁴Responsible notably for: the elaboration and follow-up of implementation of the policy for the protection and promotion of older persons; social education for the social protection of older persons; implementation and follow-up of support measures for older persons; development and monitoring the implementation of programmes and projects for older persons; organisation of supervision of institutions in charge of protection of older persons; monitoring the application of national and international legal instruments on the protection of older persons; promotion and follow-up of research activities on ageing.

personnel and victims of war of Cameroonian nationality³³⁵. On its part, the Secretariat of State is mainly responsible for support to ex-servicemen and war victims³³⁶.

1085- The NSIF plays an important role in this institutional network. Under the technical supervision of MINTSS and financial supervision of the Ministry of Finance (MINFI), it is responsible for managing the social security schemes of the private sector. This mission is reiterated by Decree No. 2018/354 of 7 June 2018 on the reorganisation and functioning of the NSIF.

1086- In line with the protection of the rights of older persons, Cameroon supports the mandate of the Working Group on the Rights of Older Persons and People with Disabilities (special mechanism of the AComHPR) as well as the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all Human Rights by older persons (special mechanism of the United Nations Human Rights Council).

1087- This Initial Report presents diverse measures (normative, institutional, strategic, operational and others) taken to implement the Protocol to the ACHPR on the rights of older persons in respect to their protection generally, equality and access to justice, healthcare and other matters.

CHAPTER 1: RIGHT TO EQUALITY AND ACCESS TO JUSTICE

1088- Older persons are ensured access to justice and equal protection before the law and benefit from some initiatives on the elimination of discrimination against them.

Section 1: Access to Justice and Equal Protection before the Law (Article 4)

1089- Measures adopted are related to laws on equal treatment and protection, legal aid for the protection of rights and training of officials in charge of applying the law.

§1: Laws on Equal Treatment and Protection

1090- The principle of equality, applicable to the management and protection of older persons, is enshrined in the Preamble of the Constitution of Cameroon, subject of Law No. 96/6 of 18 January 1996 to amend the Constitution of 2 June 1972, as amended and supplemented by Law No. 2008/1 of 14 April 2008. This principle, which is repeated and explained in legislative

³³⁵ In this way, this Office: provides social assistance to members in the form of aid or emergency support and exceptional assistance upon request (reimbursement of medical bills, material or financial assistance, etc.); serves as a link between Government s and its members (administrative support for pension and other rights); manages the files of ex-servicemen, military personnel on retirement and victims of war as well as their assets; and encourages military personnel on retirement to return to active life.

³³⁶ It is also responsible for the implementation, in collaboration with competent Government s, of all Government programmes geared towards assistance, supervision and reintegration of ex-servicemen and victims of war; consideration of the worries of ex-servicemen and victims of war in the development strategies of the country; acquisition of immovable property for institutions within its jurisdiction and under its supervisory authority; maintenance, development and promotion of the sacred duty of remembrance; supervision of institutions intervening within its field of competence. Besides the central services, this Secretariat of State has 10 Regional Divisions with each Division per Region as well as 58 Divisional Units with each Unit per Division.

instruments, applies to all areas of public life, such as access to healthcare (Law No. 96/3 of 4 January 1996 to lay down the framework law in the health sector, in its Section 4), vocational training (Law No. 2018/10 of 11 July 2018 governing vocational training in Cameroon, in its Section 4), higher education (Law No. 2023/7 of 25 July 2023 on Higher Education Policy in Cameroon, in its Section 14) to justice in general³³⁷, to criminal justice in particular (Law No. 2016/7 of 12 July 2016 relating to the Penal Code, Section 1-1), to social security and concerning public policy and safety (Civil Code, Section 3).

1091- Moreover, Cameroon is a party to international instruments which specifically deal with equal protection and non-discrimination including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (applicable to older persons), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (applicable to older women), the Convention concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation and the Convention concerning Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value (applicable to older persons in employment). These instruments, which were integrated directly into Cameroonian Law and guarantee equal treatment and protection are applicable by officials in charge of applying the law and can be invoked by older persons.

§2: Legal Aid for the Protection of Rights

1092- Older persons can receive legal aid to ensure the protection of their rights. In addition to legal aid which can to some extent, be provided to older persons by social workers, they can also seek legal aid when they lack sufficient resources, as provided for in Law No. 2009/4 of 14 April 2009. Legal aid covers all expenses relating to proceedings, procedures or acts for which it was granted, including the fees of court appointed Lawyers.

§3: Training of Officials in charge of Applying the Law

1093- In general, to facilitate the interpretation and effective application of policies and laws relating to Human Rights, including the rights of older persons, initial and continuous training on the subject is provided for Officials in charge of applying the law, such as Judicial and Legal Officers, members of defence and security forces, etc. (**§ 121 et seq**).

Section 2: Elimination of Discrimination (Articles 3 and 6)

1094- The State worked towards eliminating as much as possible all forms of discrimination against older persons by organising several campaigns. During the period under review, 281 campaigns to combat marginalisation, isolation and ill-treatment of older persons were organised by the State for 6,698 persons including 3,377 women and 3,321 men.

To promote intergenerational dialogue, 189 communication sessions and educative talks were organised in communities. Through these dialogues, 2,340 persons were reached including 1,235 women and 1,105 men. These dialogues were in alignment with specific objective No. 2 of the National Policy Document for the Promotion and Protection of Older Persons in Cameroon, which is to promote intergenerational dialogue and discussions.

³³⁷ In its Preamble, the Constitution of Cameroon provides to this effect that “the law shall ensure the right of every person to a fair hearing before the courts”.

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1095- To guarantee the right of older persons to equal protection and access to justice, measures adopted consisted in enforcing legislation on equal treatment and protection as concerns older persons, providing older persons legal assistance for the protection of their rights including legal aid and to fight discrimination against older persons, notably through awareness-raising campaigns. Some of the challenges encountered include scarcity of specific training on the protection of the rights of older persons.

CHAPTER 2: PROTECTION OF OLDER PERSONS

1096- As vulnerable persons, older persons need protection which takes into account their peculiarities and needs. Apart from the special protection granted to older persons living with disabilities and older women, the State carried out activities to guarantee social insurance for older persons, preserve their rights against abuse and harmful practices including in situations of disaster and conflict.

Section 1: Social Protection (Article 7)

1097- The social protection of older persons is guaranteed through the existence of a normative and strategic framework. Moreover, some older persons benefit from social insurance and assistance.

§1: Normative and Strategic Framework relating to Social Protection of Older Persons

1098- The social protection of older persons is guaranteed through several laws and the existence of a strategic and institutional framework.

A: Overview of Instruments relating to the Social Protection of Older Persons

1099- Cameroon has a normative framework relating to the social protection of older persons made up of specific and general instruments:

1100- Regarding general instruments which contain provisions that protect or are likely to protect the rights of older persons, the following can be cited:

- the Constitution, which, in its Preamble, enshrines the principle of protection of older persons in these words: “The Nation shall protect (...) the elderly”;
- The Civil Code provides that children shall be responsible for maintenance of ascendants which implies the obligation to assist them in case of need;
- the Penal Code (notably: Section 180 on maintenance which sanctions failure to pay maintenance due to ascendants; Section 351 which makes assault on ascendants an aggravating circumstance of Section 275 (murder), Section 277 (grievous harm) and Section 278 (assault occasioning death) and results in double penalty provided for in

Section 279 (1) (assault occasioning grievous harm), Section 280 (simple harm) and Section 281 (slight harm));

- the Criminal Procedure Code (comprising provisions that govern the protection of older persons, particularly Section 565 which states “an order of imprisonment in default of payment shall not be passed against a person of more than sixty (60) years old at the time of its execution... ”
- Decree No. 2023/42 of 25 January 2023 to lay down the rules and regulations and organisation of the profession of Bailiff and Enforcement Agent: pursuant to this Decree, the retirement age for Bailiffs which was 60 years³³⁸ has changed to 65 years;
- Decree No. 2025/316 of 16 July 2025 to regulate and organise the profession of Notary Public: pursuant to this Decree, the retirement age for Notaries Public which was 60 years³³⁹ has changed to 70 years;
- Decree No. 2023/337 of 8 August 2023 to lay down special rules and regulations governing research personnel: This Decree revised the retirement age for Chief and Senior Research Officers from 60 years to 65 years.

1101- Regarding specific instruments, the following can be cited:

- Law No. 69/LF/18 of 10 November 1969 to institute an insurance scheme for old-age, incapacity pensions and death benefits;
- Ordinance No. 73/17 of 22 May 1973 to organise social insurance (as amended by Law No. 84/6 of 4 July 1984);
- Decree No. 74/759 of 26 August 1974 to organise the civil pensions scheme (as amended and supplemented by Decree No. 94/36 of 1 March 1994);
- Decree No. 76/460 of 12 October 1976 to organise the military pensions scheme based on the duration of service and incapacity pensions (and subsequent amendments thereto);
- Decree No. 92/220/PM of 8 May 1992 to lay down the procedures for the transfer to the State the management of old age, disability and death pensions of State agents under the Labour Code (as amended and supplemented by Decree No. 93/933/PM of 16 April 1993);
- Decree No. 92/221 8 May 1992 fixing the retirement age of State employees under the Labour code, amended and supplemented by Decree No. 93/334/PM of 13 April 1993;
- Law No. 99/14 of 22 December 1999 governing NGOs, (this law led to the creation of several associations and NGOs for the protection and defence of the rights of older persons, notably the Beneficial Association of Older Persons in Cameroon (MUPAC) and the Care4 Association); Law No. 2001/18 of 18 December 2001 to transfer to the State the coverage and management of family allowances for State employees governed by the Labour Code;
- Decree No. 2014/2377 / PM of 13 August 2014 to lay down the terms and conditions for voluntarily insured persons to benefit from the old-age, incapacity and death pension plan (This decree gives non-salaried workers, including self-employed workers and those of the informal sector, the possibility to voluntarily insure themselves to benefit from coverage under the old-age, incapacity and death pension scheme); and

³³⁸ Pursuant to Decree No. 79/448 of 5 November 1979.

³³⁹ Decree No. 95/34 of 24 February 1995 to regulate and organise the profession of Notary Public.

- Decree No. 2018/354 of 7 June 2018 relating to the reorganisation and functioning of the NSIF;
- Decree No. 2020/376 of 8 July 2020 to fix the coefficient for the upward revision of certain old-age and incapacity pensions as well as death benefits granted by the National Social Insurance Fund was promulgated. This Decree provides that old-age and incapacity pensions as well as death benefits in force since 31 March 2016 are revised upward by a 20-percent coefficient, with effect from 1 August 2020.

B: Strategic and Institutional Framework for the Protection of Older Persons

1102- At the strategic level, the State adopted a National Policy Document for the protection and promotion of older persons in Cameroon and a National Plan of Action for the protection and promotion of older persons in Cameroon (2019-2023). The major strategic thrusts of the National Policy Document for the protection and promotion of older persons in Cameroon include: provision of public transport services, tailored and accessible in rural and urban areas; organisation of awareness-raising and educative activities for decision-makers, private stakeholders, RLAs and CSOs, development and availability of social services adapted to universal accessibility ; subsidies for basic social services; and promotion of family care of older persons.

1103- At the institutional level, a Department for Social Protection of Persons with Disabilities and the Elderly People of MINAS was established by Decree No. 2005/160 of 25 May 2005 on the organisation of the Ministry of Social Affairs. This Department has a Sub-department for the protection of Elderly People.

§2: Social Insurance for Older Persons

1104- Older persons are covered by NSIF under the social insurance scheme which allows them benefit from various services such as old-age pensions and annuities. Thus, from 2022 to 2024, 308,912 older persons were covered by NSIF, that is 99,110 in 2022, 104,286 in 2023 and 105,116 in 2024.

1105- Moreover, since 2022, the Cameroonian social security system improved with automation of the payment of old-age pensions to beneficiaries who fulfilled eligibility conditions and without prior submission of a file. Thus, thanks to the systematic saving of data of socially insured persons throughout their career, NSIF has the necessary information to process payment without prior administrative procedures. This improvement was made possible by technological updating of management tools which help prevent human errors, improve efficiency of services and guarantees transparent and smooth payment of pensions.

§3: Social Assistance to Older Persons

1106- To ensure that older persons participate in inclusive development and socio-economic reskilling, the Plan of Action 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 CFAF 1 417,000,000³⁴⁰. The implementation of the said Document in 2023 enabled MINAS to successfully take actions such as supporting the setting up of umbrella associations or volunteer networks to fight against ageism and enable older persons get access to loans, carrying out income-generating activities and public contracts. A total of CFAF

³⁴⁰ About 2,163,358.78 Euros

588,000,000³⁴¹ was required to carry out 6 actions and 21 activities focused on basic social services for older persons.

1107- Public welfare assessed at CFAF 193,541,983³⁴² was made available for 21,119 older persons between 2022 and 2024, that is CFAF 76,599,994³⁴³ for 9,965 older persons (6,192 women and 3,773 men) in 2022, at CFAF 67,339,489³⁴⁴ to 5,546 older persons (that is 1,600 women and 3,946 men) in 2023, CFAF 49,602,500³⁴⁵ to 5,608 older persons (that is 2,179 women and 2,883 men) in 2024.

Section 2: Protection against Harmful Practices (Article 8)

1108- In 2023, the Cameroon Human Rights Commission (CHRC) published a declaration highlighting the importance of protecting older persons and calling for the fight against harmful practices.

1109- Specialised reception centres were set up to provide protection, medical support and psychological rehabilitation to older persons, victims of abuse. An example of such centres is the Louise MARILLAC Centre at Nsimalen.

1110- Furthermore, targeted actions were carried out in collaboration with local authorities, traditional rulers and CSOs to denounce harmful traditional practices against older persons such as social exclusion and ill-treatment based on superstitious beliefs. Thus, in October 2022, MINAS organised a national workshop on the protection of older persons against violence and accusations of witchcraft with support from WHO and the European Union. Also, the Regional Forum on traditional practices and the dignity of older persons, was organised in November 2023 in Maroua by the *Réseau camerounais pour les droits des personnes âgées* (Cameroon Network for the Rights of Older Persons). During the forum, the fight against harmful traditional practices was discussed.

Section 3: Protection of Older Women (Article 9)

1111- The State launched initiatives aimed at strengthening the protection of women in Cameroon, including older women, against all forms of gender-based violence and discrimination (See §695, and 815 et seq.)

1112- Furthermore, the right to access land and to inheritance by women including older women was guaranteed (§ 226 et seq and §880 et seq).

Section 4: Protection of Older Persons with Disabilities (Article 13)

1113- Cameroon implemented several initiatives to improve the protection of persons living with disabilities, including older persons. Thus, there exist a legal framework and policies, infrastructure and programmes to promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities.

³⁴¹ About 897,709.92 Euros

³⁴² About 295,483.94 Euros.

³⁴³ About 116,946.55 Euros.

³⁴⁴ About 102,808.38 Euros.

³⁴⁵ About 75,729.01 Euros.

1114- As regards access of persons with disabilities including older persons, see § 1028 et seq.

Section 5: Protection of Older Persons in Conflict and Disaster Situations (Article 14)

1115- This protection is guaranteed by the State to all, including older persons, and was discussed in previous chapters (refer Section 5 of the Rights of the People, Chap 2 of the Report under the Charter on democracy, concerning protection in conflict situation) (see §97, 123, 643 et seq, 921, 941)

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1116- Measures were taken to guarantee older persons social inclusion. Thus, the adoption of regulations and public policies, coupled with other initiatives including those of CSO helped intensify the fight against discrimination towards older persons including with disabilities. Measures were also taken to protect them from harmful practices and care was given to them in situations of security crises and disaster.

CHAPTER 3: RIGHT TO HEALTHCARE

1117- Care and support were provided for older persons. Availability of specialized units and personnel, coupled with the provision of services contributed in ensuring access to health care for older persons. Where older persons choose to be in residential care, actions were also taken to insure their wellbeing.

Section 1: Healthcare for Older Persons (Article 10)

1118- The State, through MINAS, organised campaigns to promote the role of older persons in society and the importance of providing them care within the family. For example, in the 2nd quarter of 2022, in the Littoral and North West Regions, about 6,777 new families received support to care for older persons. Moreover, during the International Day of Older Persons in 2024, MINAS organised an intergenerational dialogue in Yaounde to strengthen the traditional support system for older persons³⁴⁶.

1119- Furthermore, as part of the “Senior Volunteering Project” steered by the Ministry of Youth and Civic Education, activities were carried out relating to the promotion of charity work and volunteering in providing support to older persons. Moreover, the population was educated on respect for Human Rights and change of perception and attitude towards older persons.

1120- In addition, some community initiatives and NGOs such as the *Mutuelle des Personnes Âgées du Cameroun*-MUPAC (Beneficial Association of Older Persons in Cameroon) provide

³⁴⁶ In Cameroon, the traditional support systems for older persons are based mainly on family solidarity (support from the extended family notably children and grand-children) and community solidarity.

support programmes to family caregivers. These programmes include trainings and support groups.

1121- Furthermore, assistive devices such as wheelchairs and prostheses were distributed to persons with disabilities including older persons with disabilities. For example, in 2023 in Bafoussam, 18 persons with disabilities received devices offered by the State. Also see § 1028 et seq.

1122- During the celebration of the International Day of Older Persons on 1 October 2024, CHRC in a Declaration, insisted on the need to pay special attention to the rights and well-being of older persons. The Commission specifically advocated for better care in favour of older persons, laying emphasis on the improvement of access to healthcare and other essential services.

Section 2: Residential Care for Older Persons (Article 11)

1123- Considering that family solidarity is still deeply rooted in the society, the huge majority of older persons live with family members. However, there exist homes for the residential care for older persons in Cameroon, one of the oldest being the *Centre humanitaire Béthanie VIACAM (Vieillards Invalides et Abandonnés du Cameroun)* in Yaounde created in 1981. On 5 March 2024, as part of the celebration of International Women's Day in 2024, female staff of MINRESI visited Béthanie VIACAM, and offered gifts to older persons residing there.

1124- Another of such homes is *La Référence, set up in Douala by Association Amour pour les personnes âgées du Cameroun (APAC)* where care is free for those who have no one to support them.

1125- Furthermore, on 16 January 2024 in Yaounde, the NGO Living Alternatives for the Ageing (LAFTA) launched, the first social and recreational centre for older persons, refugees and internally displaced persons. LAFTA brings together older persons within a multipurpose center, with the objective of interaction, networking, and socializing in order to improve quality of daily living. At the centre, older persons socialise with others, engage in recreational activities and sports depending on their state of health and have access to a geriatric unit.

Section 3: Access to Health Services (Art 15)

1126- Under Chapter 4 of the Policy Document on Ageing titled Implementation Strategies, the general objective relating to the axis on health and wellbeing is contributing to the promotion of the health and wellbeing of older persons with specific objectives including improving access to socio-medical services and medicines for vulnerable older persons and improving appropriate care for older persons. To achieve this, attention was paid to aspects including the availability of specialized medical personnel and facilities and the general provision of care across the nation.

§1: Availability of Specialised Personnel and Facilities.

1127- Nurses specialising in gerontology are trained in nursing, midwifery and medical-sanitary training schools, as well as in Faculties of Medicine.

1128- On 23 and 24 May 2025 in Yaounde, the *Centre pour le Développement des Bonnes Pratiques en Santé* and the Medical Imaging of the Faculty of Medicine and Biomedical

Sciences at the University of Yaounde 1 brought together nearly 60 healthcare professionals in the context of the 3rd National Postgraduate Training Days in Medical Imaging. It provided a platform for discussions and training for medical specialists, and medical specialists in training. The Days marked a significant step towards enhancing the skills and knowledge of those working in the sector of older persons' health to enable them provide better care for older patients through appropriate medical imaging practices.

1129- One of the tasks of the of Family Health in the Ministry of Public Health, is drafting and follow up of programmes for the promotion of the health of adolescents, men and older persons. Thus, there are geriatric units in hospitals and for 2nd category hospitals for example, their organisational chart provides for geriatric units. Geriatric units are therefore being progressively established in these hospitals, including the Yaounde Central Hospital, the Laquintinie Hospital in Douala, Garoua Regional Hospital Centre and the Ebolowa Regional Hospital Centre.

§2: Provision of Care

1130- The National Strategic Plan for Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health and Nutrition (RMNCAH-Nut) for 2024-2030 considers older persons. Its first strategic axes extends the coverage of high impact intentions to reduce morbidity and mortality in mothers, newborns, Children and Adolescents, youths, women and men, including older persons.

1131- As part of MINAS' public assistance programme for older persons, from 1 January 2023 to 1 January 2024, 5546 older persons (1600 women and 3946 men) received medical assistance.

1132- Efforts were made to provide healthcare at low cost. At Centre Pasteur du Cameroun which is a national reference laboratory for 28 pathologies, persons aged 65 and above (upon presentation of a retirement decision plus national identity card) and retired civil servants (upon presentation of professional card or pays lip plus national identity card) benefited from a reduction of 30% on the cost of medical examinations.

1133- Furthermore, campaigns were carried out during which older persons were treated free of charge. For example, from 25 to 29 September 2023, MINAS, in collaboration with the Magrabi Hospital ICO Cameroon Eye Institute, organised a free screening campaign for eye diseases in older persons as part of activities to mark the International Day of Older Persons. Those diagnosed with diseases, were operated free of charge at Magrabi ICO Cameroon Eye Institute. Moreover, free healthcare was provided by some establishments or organisations within the framework of the said Day. Hence, as part of activities to mark the 33rd edition, in 2023, ONACAM organised a free health campaign on 10 and 11 October 2023, during which retired soldiers, ex-servicemen, war veterans and victims of war were consulted free of charge for ophthalmological and urological problems by specialist doctors from military hospitals. Furthermore, as part of activities of the 34th edition in 2024, the Yaounde Central Hospital organised free consultation for hypertension, diabetes, frailty, muscular disorders, dental disorders, hearing disorders, decline in intrinsic abilities.

1134- The *Société Camerounaise de Gériatrie et Gérontologie* which aims to promote and develop good practice in the management of issues related to the health of the elderly and ageing also carried out health campaigns for older persons including in the run-up to the 34th

International Day of Older Persons when it offered dental consultations, screening for neurocognitive disorders, geriatric consultations and organised a symposium on the management of falls among older persons.

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1135- While efforts were made in training geriatric personnel, ensuring the availability of geriatric units in some hospitals, these facilities as well as specialised staff remained insufficient, particularly in rural areas. Bridging this gap is crucial for providing adequate care to the growing elderly population. Healthcare services were also ensured sometimes at reduced cost. However, the exclusion of older persons as a specific vulnerable category from the initial phase of the Universal Health Coverage highlights a critical gap.

CHAPTER 4: OTHER MATTERS

1136- Several actions were carried out to guarantee older persons' access to training, participation in programmes and recreational activities, their right to make decisions and access to infrastructure. Measures were also taken to collect data and ensure coordination, raise awareness and prepare for ageing. Moreover, as with other citizens, older persons also have duties.

Section 1: Access to Training (Article 16)

1137- During the 33rd edition of the International Day of Older Persons in 2023, the Directorate General of ONACAM organised week-long activities including training sessions on the production of household products. During the event, members of ONACAM presented varieties of products they made, including soap, dye and bleach.

1138- From 3 to 4 July 2024 in Yaounde, during the 14th edition of the International Widow's Day organised under the theme, fighting against vulnerabilities of widows, improving their socio-economic situation, widows who, for the most part, are older women, were trained on income-generating activities by members of the ONACAM working group for widows.

1139- In addition, on 10 July 2024, a capacity-building workshop on entrepreneurship was organised by MINPMEESA for older persons particularly ex-servicemen and retirees, to ignite in them, the desire to invest in income-generating activities, while offering them incentives that will facilitate their entry into this new professional life.

1140- MINAS continued to encourage retirees and older persons to register on the skills and professionally reskilled persons database so that their skills could be made available to businesses or individuals in need of their services. At the end of 2018, about 846 older persons had already registered in the database in the West (812), North (24) and Centre (10) Regions.

SECTION 2: RIGHT TO MAKE DECISIONS (Article 5)

1141- Measures adopted in this area concern the legislation on decision making concerning the well-being of older persons, how they benefit from social welfare and legal aid in case of

disability, all the laws and other measures on freedom of opinion and participation in socio-political life.

§1: Legislation on Decision- Making concerning Well-being

1142- As adults, pursuant to Section 488 of the Cameroon Civil Code, older persons are competent to execute all acts of civic life and can therefore freely, without interference, make decisions concerning their physical and mental well-being. They are at liberty, pursuant to Section 1984 of the said Code to give (by notarial deed, by private deed or even verbally) power of attorney to an agent to perform their wishes and instructions.

1143- Moreover, on the basis of the legislation on freedom of association, older persons may form an association and designate representatives to undertake actions relating to their well-being. For example, in 2003, MUPAC was created. It has thousands of members and its mission is to: negotiate the provision of healthcare for older persons in health facilities, guarantee self-insurance, inspire and organise the creation of groups of older persons, provide training for their caregivers, guarantee a proper burial for them, create reception centres for them, defend their material and moral interests, etc.

§2: Social Support and Legal Aid in Case of Disability

1144- In case of disability, older persons may request the assistance of social workers or other qualified persons to guide them in making decisions for their well-being. To illustrate, in order to increase the number of persons trained for this, 1,809 outreach workers were trained on psychosocial support of older persons in the 10 regions of Cameroon in 2022.

1145- Older persons may also obtain such assistance from private welfare establishments pursuant to Decree No. 77/495 of 7 December 1977 to fix the conditions for the setting up and the functioning of private welfare establishments . Private welfare establishments shall cover “the *activities of a duly authorised association, institution, undertaking or service with a humanitarian and apolitical aim created by a natural person with a view to provide material and moral assistance or educational guidance to persons of any age, sex or race, to families or groups in order to promote their full development*” (Article 2). This is the case with the following: *Centre social et récréatif pour personnes âgées, réfugiés et déplacés de Yaoundé* (the Social and Recreational Centre for Older Persons, refugees and displaced persons Yaounde), MUPAC, *Association camerounaise pour la prise en charge des personnes âgées*, (the Cameroonian Association for Care of Older Persons) , *Association amour pour les personnes âgées du Cameroun* (Love of Olders Persons Association), *Association des retraités de l'Assemblée Nationale du Cameroun* (Association of retirees of the National Assembly of Cameroon) and *Association nationale de soutien aux personnes âgées du Cameroun* (National Association to Support Older Persons in Cameroon) .

1146- Regarding legal aid, pursuant to Section 489 *et seq.* of the Civil Code, any adult, including older persons, who is *in a habitual state of insanity , dementia or rage, may be subject to prohibition* by the court, even when this condition presents lucid intervals. In this case, they

receive assistance from a legal or appointed guardian. Depending on the nature of their illness and financial situation, the family Lawyer of the older person concerned may decide if they shall receive treatment at home or be placed in a nursing home. The revenue of such an older person shall be mainly used to improve his/her condition and speed up their healing.

1147- In the same way and pursuant to Section 513 of this Code, prodigal older persons may be prohibited from pleading, compromising, borrowing, receiving movable capital and discharging it/contracting/entering into contracts/, disposing of or mortgaging their property without the assistance of a court-appointed lawyer.

§3: Laws and other Measures on Freedom of Opinion and Participation in Socio-Political Life

1148- Constitutional and legislative provisions on public freedoms (freedom of association, of expression, assembly, public demonstration, etc.) (§46 et seq) apply to older persons and gives them the freedom to express their opinion. Also applicable to them are measures relating to the right to participate in the management of public affairs (§93 et seq).

Section 3: Participation in Recreational Programmes and Activities (Article 17)

1149- MINAT and MINAS support charitable and religious organisations as well as charitable NGOs in their activities focused on granting older persons access to recreational programmes. MUPAC, and aims to cater for older persons by guaranteeing their well-being and health has more than 5,000 active members and carries out its activities in the West and Littoral Regions.

1150- Moreover, Living Alternatives for the Ageing (LAFTA) in Yaounde, which is a social recreational centre, has a number of free recreational, relaxation, interactive activities and those on well-being such as therapeutic massages, beauty care, dance sessions, tailored board games such as *songo*, chess, scrabble, monopoly and ludo.

Section 4: Access to Infrastructure (Article 18)

1151- Law No. 2010/2 of 13 April 2010 on the protection and promotion of persons with disabilities and Decree No. 2018/6233/PM of 26 July 2018 to lay down the procedures for implementing Law No. 2010/2 of 13 April 2010, provide for the construction of wheelchair ramps for persons with disabilities in building projects. It has become more common for public buildings to be constructed taking this provision into consideration. These ramps also facilitate access to buildings for older persons.

Section 5: Duties of Older Persons (Article 20)

1152- Apart from initiatives taken as regards their rights, several actions were also undertaken to encourage older persons to carry out their duties towards their family and society.

1153- Regarding citizen and community participation, older persons were brought together for civic activities during the celebration of international days. Furthermore, they were included as social mediators in neighbourhoods and villages and their roles as wise people and opinion leaders were promoted in traditional chiefdoms. For example, in 2022, 120 older persons were

included as “community mediators” in the Maroua and Yaounde 2 councils; in 2023, in Bafoussam, testimony sessions for older persons were organised by MINAS as part of the programme *Voices of the Elderly* during citizen days and in 2024, 10 committees of *Wise Mentors* were created in Ngaoundere and Ebolowa.

1154- For older persons to pass on values and collective memory, they were given the opportunity to hold educational talks and recount traditional tales. They were involved in intergenerational programmes in schools and cultural centres and their role as custodians of cultural and moral memory was recognised. Thus, “Village Stories” intergenerational workshops were organised in Garoua in 2022 and sessions of Vigils for older persons were organised in Batouri and Limbe.

1155- Regarding family and educational duties, awareness-raising campaigns on the role of grandparents in child education; their roles as moral and emotional pillars in the family as well as in intergenerational solidarity in urban and rural areas were promoted. In 2022 this was done through campaigns on the national radio station via the programme *Model Grandparents*. The *Older persons and Youth in dialogue* Forum was organised in Garoua and Mbalmayo in 2023 and the *Grandparents providing educational support* programme was organised in 2024 in Yaounde.

Section 6: Coordination and Data Collection (Article 21)

1156- Cameroon guaranteed data collection and coordination as regards older persons.

§1: National Data Collection

1157- Applicable to the collection and analysis of national data on older persons, Law No. 2020/10 of 20 July 2020 to regulate statistical activity in Cameroon lays down the basic principles for producing official statistical data, rules of professional conduct, the institutional framework for statistical production and the terms and conditions for coordinating statistical activity. In application of this law and previous instruments on statistical activity, the National Institute of Statistics (NIS) carried out several statistical operations, the results of which are available on its website (www.ins-cameroun.cm/). Some of these operations took into consideration older persons.

§2: Coordination

1158- Cameroon did not have a formal national mechanism for ageing. The Sub-Department for the protection of the elderly in MINAS (which comprises a Service for the special protection and support to retraining of older persons, a Service for the protection and promotion of the rights of older persons) is assigned similar missions to those of any such a mechanism. This Sub-Department is responsible for the: preparation, implementation and follow-up of programmes for special protection and promotion of the know-how of older persons, control of social standards defined for the protection of older persons, organisation and monitoring of initiatives beneficial to older persons, and preparation and promotion of programmes to retrain them.

1159- This Sub-Department is also responsible for: liaison with security and social insurance institutions, monitoring public and private institutions for the protection of older persons; preparation and follow-up of implementation of programmes for the promotion of older persons, monitoring the application of national and international legal instruments on the protection of older persons, organisation of the International Day of Older Persons and all other celebrations concerning them, and raising awareness on the rights of older persons.

Section 7: Awareness on Ageing and Preparation for Old Age (Art 19)

1160- Awareness raising activities were carried out on old age and combating negative attitudes towards ageing including during the International Day of Older Persons celebrated each year aimed at promoting the rights of older people, strengthening care and support systems, and raising public awareness of the challenges posed by an ageing population. The 34th edition of the Day was jointly launched by the Minister of Social Affairs and the Minister of Women’s Empowerment and the Family in Meyomessi on 20 September 2024, under the theme of the edition “Ageing with Dignity: The Importance of Strengthening Care and Support Systems for Older Persons Worldwide”. The theme was a call to strengthen policies, legislation and practices that strengthen care and support systems for older persons. Activities included conferences, debates and presentations on topics related to ageing and the rights of older persons.

1161- It is within the framework of the celebration of this Day that the Yaounde Central Hospital organised talks on Nutritional disorders common in older persons as well as on healthy aging and the ONACAM on 2 and 3 October 2024, organised a fitness walk for older persons and a round table discussion on nutritional health. For the 2023 edition, ONACAM on 12 October, organized talks on how to ensure better health for war veterans, ex-servicemen and war victims with a variety of sub-themes, care for older persons, rheumatism and old age, stroke sufferers' mental health and reintegration into civilian life, post-traumatic stress disorder, and finally, a discussion on human rights and the protection of older persons.

1162- For other actions relating to awareness raising on ageing, see § 599 under the report on the Charter.

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1163- Despite financial challenges, the State continued to mobilise resources to guarantee the rights of older persons, notably by undertaking actions aimed at guaranteeing older persons the right to health and recreation, access to infrastructure, participation in decision-making social inclusion and maintenance. Moreover, awareness-raising activities were carried out on ageing and the fight against negative attitudes towards ageing.

1164- The State continued to ensure that older persons fulfil their duties. To enhance the protection of the rights of older persons, it is important to set up a national mechanism officially devoted to ageing.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

1165- In addition to the system already in place and in line with the Constitution which provides for the protection of older persons, Cameroon, upon ratification of the Protocol to the ACHPR on the Rights of older persons, adopted several measures to implement the Protocol. The State addressed cross-cutting issues such as participation in decision- making, access to public buildings and preparation for ageing, the objective being to enable older persons enjoy their Human Rights in dignity, equality and non-discrimination including in situations of crises. To this effect, without overlooking their duties, older persons have, to an extent, benefited from social, medical and healthcare coverage, protection from abuse, equal treatment, as well as legal aid to exercise their rights. Additional efforts were still needed in order to mitigate cases of stereotypes, stigmatisation, marginalisation, discrimination, as well as social and political exclusion of older persons. /

GENERAL CONCLUSION OF THE COMBINED REPORT

1166- In a bid to domesticate the principles and values prescribed in the ACHPR, the Maputo Protocol, the Kampala Convention, the Protocol on the rights of persons with disabilities in Africa and the Protocol on older persons in Africa, the State internalised some provisions of treaties by adopting specific legislation, making strategic choices, setting-up institutions and carrying out activities for the promotion and protection of the rights enshrined in the above-mentioned legal instruments.

1167- Strategic developments can be illustrated through the adoption of the NDS30, the strategy for the development of the industries and services sector, the strategy for the development of infrastructure, the strategy for social services and the national social protection policy (2020-2030), the health sector strategy and the governance strategy.

1168- At the normative level, the country ratified regional and international instruments such as the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds, the multilateral Convention to implement tax treaty related measures to prevent base erosion and profit shifting, the Convention on the protection and use of transboundary watercourses and international lakes, the Protocol to eliminate illicit trade in tobacco products, the Statute of the Women Development Organization in the Member States of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the Agreement on the conservation of gorillas and their habitats, the international Convention for the control and management of ships' ballast water and sediments, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the rights of the child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities, the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime, the United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, the revised Treaty on the Inter-African Conference on Social Welfare, the Protocol to the ACHPR on the rights of persons with disabilities, the multilateral convention on social security of the Inter-African Conference on Social Welfare, the Protocol to the ACHPR on the Rights of Older Persons in Africa and the Marrakech Treaty to facilitate access to published works for persons who are blind, visually impaired, or otherwise print disabled³⁴⁷.

1169- At the national level, legislation was enhanced on several issues. Laws adopted include Law No. 2023/9 of 25 July 2023 to institute the charter on child online protection in Cameroon, Law No. 2021/23 of 16 December 2021 governing inter-branch organizations in Cameroon, Law No. 2019/4 of 25 April 2019 governing social economy in Cameroon, Law No. 2022/14 of 14 July 2022 relating to medically assisted reproduction in Cameroon, Law No. 2022/8 of 27 April 2022 relating to medical research involving human subjects in Cameroon, Law No. 2023/7 of 25 July 2023 on Higher Education policy in Cameroon, Law No. 2024/8 of 24 July 2024 to lay down forestry and wildlife regulations, Law No. 2024/16 of 23 December 2024 to organize the civil registration system in Cameroon and Law No. 2024/17 of 23 December 2024 relating to personal data protection in Cameroon.

³⁴⁷ While instruments of ratification had already been deposited for some of these treaties, for others, the deposit of instruments of ratification was in progress.

1170- Institutions set up or reorganised include: the national mechanism for the prevention of torture, the Committee to follow up the implementation of the Major National Dialogue, regional committees for the coordination of sector interventions in favour of the prevention and fight against trafficking in and smuggling of persons, Regional Councils, the Inter-ministerial Committee on Local Services, the Public Independent Conciliator, the Peacekeeping Operations Training School of Motchebougou, the National School of Local Administration and SONAMINES.

1171- Moreover, during the period under review, public authorities worked towards following the recommendations relating to the implementation of the ACHPR, the Maputo Protocol and the Kampala Convention. This was fully translated in the fight against discrimination, the protection of the right to equality of all before the law or equal protection of all by the law, guarantee of personal freedom and protection against illegal detention, guarantees of the right to fair trial, the right to be informed and to participate in the management of public affairs, the promotion and the protection of the right to life, the right to ownership and housing, the right to work, the right to health, the right to education, the freedom of association and assembly, the freedom of expression and freedom of movement.

1172- In addition, actions relating to peoples' rights were carried out especially concerning the right to self-determination, the right to freely dispose of natural resources and wealth, the right to a satisfactory general environment and the right to economic, social and cultural development. These actions were reflected in the increase of resources allocated to decentralization, and the adoption of Law No. 2019/24 of 24 December 2019 to institute the general code of regional and local authorities in which the specificity of the North West and South Regions were taken into consideration.

1173- Significant strides were made in the promotion and protection of Human Rights through various actions carried out by the State to meet its obligations under the above mentioned regional instruments. These achievements need to be preserved and consolidated, considering the challenges to be addressed, including curbing insecurity in some regions of the country, nurturing the Human Rights culture in all spheres of the society, raising the living standards of the people and fighting against climate change.

1174- Cameroon is aware of the complexity of these challenges and aims at redoubling its efforts to meet them, counting on the assistance of its technical and financial partners.

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