

Forum:	Disarmament and International Security Committee (GA1)
Issue:	Promoting stability and disarmament in Cameroon
Student Officer:	Sigurd Gydehøj
Position:	Co-Chair

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

Dear Delegates,

My name is Sigurd, I am eighteen years old and am currently in my final year of school in England at Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School. It is my pleasure to serve as part of the Student Officer team and as your Co-Chair for the 12th PSMUN conference. I cannot wait to meet you all for a long awaited in person conference and hope that we can all have a positive and illuminating experience. This will be my first-time chairing at a conference outside of my school and I look forward to meeting new faces and helping to share my love for Model United Nations. From my experience from serving in the secretariat at my school, I look forward to taking on a new challenge through chairing.

The First General Assembly Committee, in its aims of disarmament and global peace, encapsulates and compliments the conference theme of 'Pacifism and Injustice'. These aims are significant when viewing the situation in Cameroon alongside the other topics of the Agenda.

Conflict in Cameroon has experienced a significant increase in recent years over the so-called Anglophone Crisis accompanied by political unrest and foreign insurgency. The United Nations (UN) as a forum for international cooperation holds a responsibility to seek to diffuse tensions and should do its best to undo the 'injustice' which it potentially aggravated, and to strive through 'pacifism' for stability in Cameroon.

That being said, I hope that this study guide will serve as a useful and synoptic springboard for the furthering of your research. Whilst this guide may serve as the bulk of your research, I encourage delegates to immerse themselves further in the topic, particularly in regard to their respective countries' stances and policy on the matter so as they may present a more nuanced argument reflective of the one which their country would take in the real world.

If any delegate has any queries or requires further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me via email at sigurdgrydehoej@hotmail.com.

Yours truly,

Sigurd

INTRODUCTION

Cameroon is a country located in West Africa with a population of around 28 million. It borders Nigeria, Chad, the Central African Republic, Congo, and Gabon. The western border, shared with Nigeria, has been prone to various disputes throughout Cameroonian history, known as the Bakassi Conflict, which has led to tensions between the two countries in the past. The insurgency of the terrorist organization Boko Haram served to amplify pre-existing animosity and further the conflict. Whilst certain regions of the border reside along lines drawn by mountain ranges or rivers, the border region remains prone to conflict, maintaining largely similar lines to those drawn during British colonial rule and the German-French border.



Figure 1: Map of Cameroon

Conflict between the government and a multitude of Non-State Armed Groups (NSAGs) has plagued the country for much of its existence. The Cameroonian Government lacks both the institutions, infrastructure, and authority to peacefully resolve the problems at hand without means of force and suppression. A refusal of negotiation, and a heavy hand has been a distinct mark of the Cameroonian Government's approach to rebel groups. These groups include those related to the Ambazonian independence movement, and external international NSAGs. Such conflict has led to immense instability within the country with massive humanitarian dilemmas and a fractured system of governance. To tackle the issue, an alternate approach must be taken, one which breaks from the current mold of policy.

Cameroon, in its position of geopolitical importance and as a growing African economic power, must resolve its internal conflicts. The impact of civil war in Cameroon extends to neighboring countries, creating a security threat and incentivizing other similar movements, as seen by the Ambazonian alliance with the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB). Peace and stability in Cameroon benefit the international community, providing a valuable trade partner which is highly desirable in the global market. As the world becomes more globalized, the effects of conflicts become ever more far-reaching. Equally, the ex-colonial powers which fractured the pre-existing Cameroon alongside the UN's ambiguous description of the union of Southern Cameroon with Cameroon in its initial documentation following the referendums have failed to implement or support stability within the region adequately.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Non-State Armed Groups (NSAGs)

“Non-State Armed Groups are groups which operate separately from the state and participate in an international or non-international conflict.”¹ Within Cameroon these are the armed groups engaged in guerilla warfare such as the groups contained within the Ambazonia Defense Forces, and external groups such as IPOB or Boko Haram.

Guerrilla Warfare

“Guerrilla warfare is a type of warfare fought by irregulars in fast-moving, small-scale actions against orthodox military and police forces and, on occasion, against rival insurgent forces, either independently or in conjunction with a larger political-military strategy.”² This has developed into a guerrilla campaign with systematic attacks from NSAGs against the Cameroonian government in regard to the Anglophone Crisis.

Referendum

“A vote in which all the people in a country or an area are asked to give their opinion about or decide an important political or social question.”³ They can be used to give a definitive public answer to divisive and impactful political decisions.

Separatism

Separatism is the advocacy of a certain group of people for separation from a larger entity on the basis of social differences. In Cameroon, the Ambazonian movement falls

¹ “Doctors without Borders | the Practical Guide to Humanitarian Law.” Guide-Humanitarian-Law.org, 2010, guide-humanitarian-law.org/content/article/3/non-state-armed-groups/.

² Robert Brown Asprey. “Guerrilla Warfare | Military Tactics.” Encyclopædia Britannica, 13 Apr. 2018, www.britannica.com/topic/guerrilla-warfare.

³ Cambridge Dictionary. “REFERENDUM | Meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary.” Cambridge.org, 21 Aug. 2019, dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/referendum.

under this definition based on a belief in the oppression of the Anglophone regions of Cameroon by the larger Francophone bloc.

Stability

Stability implies a state of balance which lacks violence or risk to its civilian populations, alongside an accepted system of governance and limited conflict, the individual security within a nation.

Disarmament

Disarmament is the withdrawal or reduction of military forces and weaponry.⁴ Disarmament in Cameroon is an important aim of this resolution and goes hand in hand with a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

Federalism

Federalism is a political system by which a central government devolves its powers to local or regional systems of governance, a division of powers. Federalism and power are what the Ambazonian movement now seeks to achieve through their conflict.

Human Rights

“Human rights are rights inherent to all human beings, regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, or any other status.”⁵ In Cameroon certain human rights such as the right to freedom of opinion, inequality of access to government, and discrimination on the basis of language and culture are inadequately adhered to, whilst the effects of these lead to further conflict and the loss of lives.

Protectorate

“A protectorate is defined as the relationship between two states, one of which exercises some decisive control over the other.”⁶

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Historical Background

Cameroon has been inhabited by humans for 50,000 years and has housed a multitude of ancient Kingdoms. Modern-day Cameroon developed as a product of European colonization, originally as the German protectorate in the 1884 Berlin Conference. German rule was maintained until German defeat in World War I (WWI), after which Cameroon was divided between the victorious powers of France and the United Kingdom via the League of Nations mandate in 1913. This mandate evolved to become

⁴ “Disarmament Noun - Definition, Pictures, Pronunciation and Usage Notes | Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary at OxfordLearnersDictionaries.com.” Oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com, 2023, www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/disarmament#:~:text=%2Fd%C9%AA%CB%88%C9%91%CB%90rm%C9%99m%C9%99nt%2F.

⁵ United Nations. “Human Rights.” United Nations, 2022, www.un.org/en/global-issues/human-rights.

⁶ “Protectorate | International Relations.” Encyclopedia Britannica, 2020, www.britannica.com/topic/protectorate-international-relations.

the UN Trusteeship Council in 1946 following the League of Nations' dissolution. This system allowed for the transferal of ownership of territories between countries under predetermined and internationally recognized terms. This division led to the creation of the French Cameroon and the British Cameroons, and, by extension, a distinct cultural division between the colonies. Britain ruled via protectorate and an extension of power from the neighboring state of Nigeria which was under British rule. France equally attempted to maintain a degree of separation, in that indigenous laws and traditions were generally respected, yet a concerted effort was made to eliminate the relic of German influence, rather opting to instill a belief in la Francophonie (the francosphere), imposing its own agendas of French multilateral nationalism.

French and British control and influence over colonies dissipated significantly over the following decades, a trend which was exacerbated by the advent of World War II (WWII). The predominantly English-speaking former Southern British Cameroons now form the modern-day Anglophone regions of Cameroon, whilst the former French colony makes up the predominantly French-speaking Francophone regions. Anti-colonial movements blossomed in both territories, taking the form of the Union des Populations du Cameroun (UPC) in the French Cameroon, and the Cameroon National Democratic Party which would advocate for the union of the Anglophone and Francophone components of Cameroon from the British side. The UPC, although embroiling the French in an extensive colonial war between 1948-55, was eventually outlawed, although it led to the eventual allowance of Cameroonian self-rule in 1956 with internal sovereignty, and independence in 1960.

In 1961, the former British Northern and Southern Cameroons held a referendum on whether to join Nigeria or the rest of Cameroon. Notably, the ballots offered no choice for independence. The British Southern Cameroons joined with Cameroon to form the Federal Republic, whilst the predominantly Muslim Northern Cameroons joined Nigeria, forming modern-day parts of the Adamawa, Borno, and Taraba States. The disparity between the Anglophone and Francophone populations is evident in the fact that the Francophones made up a majority of 80% of the total population. This would lead to the repression of Anglophone Cameroonians both culturally and politically, with a significant majority of the central government speaking on the Francophones' behalf. Not only was there a linguistic barrier, but the unclear circumstances by which the two states were joined under UNGA RES 1608 (XV) did not help the process.⁷

Following the withdrawal of colonial forces, Cameroon entered a state of rapid economic development. Initially both Francophone and Anglophone perspectives were heard, with Ahmadou Ahidjo, the first President of Cameroon (1960-82) engaging in a process of integration with the Anglophone Premier, John Foncha, who was given the post of Vice President in 1961. Whilst in theory, Cameroon now had self-determination, in practice, French control remained significant through the use of

⁷ Sess.: 1960-1961, UN General Assembly 15th. "The Future of the Trust Territory of the Cameroons under United Kingdom Administration." Digitallibrary.un.org, 1961, digitallibrary.un.org/record/206162?ln=en.

influential advisors, such as Jean-Pierre Bénard, the French ambassador to Cameroon. The centralization of government in Yaoundé, the former French colonial capital further solidified the division. By 1966 Ahidjo had made Cameroon a single-party state and criminalized political opposition, centralizing government control, and limiting federalism, granting the Anglophone region even less autonomy. In 1972, Ahidjo united Cameroon as a singular Republic, abandoning the federal approach entirely and then, composed a constitution which discarded the position of Vice President, and severely crippled the power of the Anglophone region.

Economically, Cameroon has struggled since the 1980s due to economic mismanagement and government corruption, all of which has culminated in GDP per capita of \$1,666.90.⁸ Its economy is largely focused on primary production of raw materials in cacao and oil, both of which are subject to severe price fluctuations which have hindered Cameroonian growth. The economic volatility in Cameroon and the disparity in quality of life, as indicated by its low Human Development Index ranking of 0.567 (2021), putting it at 151st place globally, is a part of the reason for the problems within the country and is crucial to understanding the topic at hand.⁹

In 1982, Paul Biya, the current president of Cameroon took the post, eventually ousting Ahidjo. Until 1992, Cameroon operated as a single-party state, an approach which Biya abandoned before the 1992 election via the decriminalization of opposition parties in 1990. However, political instability remained rife, with ardent allegations of election fraud in 1992 leading to a complete opposition boycott of the 1997 election. Since then, Biya has continued to expand his powers, revising the 1996 constitution in 2008 to extend his term limit to allow for indefinite renewability. This action led to the February Riots of 2008, in which 40 citizens were officially killed by a violent government crackdown. Biya remains a controversial figure within Cameroonian politics, with allegations of corruption, suppression of political opposition, and aggressive military policies to date.

War and Conflict

Anglophone Tensions

Calls for Anglophone regional independence first began in 1994 following the discovery of an ambiguity in the phrasing of article five of UNGA RES 1608(XV), with the resolution failing to formalize the union. Although this was a given cause, the systematic removal and diminishment of the rights of Anglophone Cameroonians, including political oppression and silencing, served to amplify tensions over a prolonged period. The movement had grown to such an extent that, following the protest of 100 people in Bamenda over the infiltration of the French language into English speaking systems in October 2016, a larger

⁸ “GDP per Capita (Current US\$) - Cameroon | Data.” Worldbank.org, 2021, data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD?locations=CM.

⁹ United Nations. “Specific Country Data - Cameroon.” Hdr.undp.org, hdr.undp.org/data-center/specific-country-data#/countries/CMR.

scale protest was launched in September 2017. This united protest was a catalyst for creating a unified Ambazonian independence movement. The chant of “We want freedom” was shouted by the protestors in an overt defiance of Cameroonian unification.¹⁰

Ambazonia

On October 1, 2017, Anglophone separatists declared independence from Cameroon, under the Ambazonian flag. This action facilitated another aggressive military response in which 17 members of independence marches were killed. Later that month, the Interim Government of Ambazonia was formed, led by Ayuk Tabe. This created an aspiring government, opposing the repressive Francophone regime, exerting organized leadership for the independence movement. However, the arrest of the majority of its senior members at the Nera Hotel on January 6, 2018, their subsequent extradition to Cameroon’s Kodengui prison, and their receipt of life sentences, left an undetermined leadership. Temporary leadership in the form of Ikome Sako did present itself, however, his council fell apart over the fighting regarding the conflict between federalists and separatists.

The fractured nature of the independence movement without a clear leader has led to a loss of unilateral policy, with a variety of approaches, such as that of the Ambazonia Defense Forces, and its alliance with Biafra independence movements (IPOB) in 2021. The internationalization of the conflict and the sharing of weaponry between groups further complicates the situation. Similarly, instances of separatist attacks on schools between 2017-21, in which teachers were beaten and parents forced to adhere to a boycott on schools for their children conflict with the Interim Government’s aims and approach.¹¹

Whilst advocacy within the Anglophone region initially fought for independence, the current stance of the Interim Government is one of an appeal for federalism and further autonomy from the central government. Such an approach involves calls for a return to the 1961 constitution, that of the Federal Republic of Cameroon, or a newly constructed one.

External Forces

The insurgency of the Nigerian Islamic terrorist group Boko Haram between December 2020 and April 2021 killed 80 civilians in their campaign in Cameroon. Boko Haram has a sustained presence across large swathes of northern Cameroon, with the war killing an estimated 3,000 Cameroonians

¹⁰Deutsche Welle (www.dw.com. “English Speakers Protest in Cameroon, Demand Equal Rights amid Calls for Secession | DW | 22.09.2017.” DW.COM, 2017, www.dw.com/en/english-speakers-protest-in-cameroon-demand-equal-rights-amid-calls-for-secession/a-40649852.

¹¹ Davies, Lizzy. ““They Punished Me for Having Books”: Schools in Cameroon Terrorised by Armed Groups.” *The Guardian*, 16 Dec. 2021, www.theguardian.com/global-development/2021/dec/16/they-punished-me-for-having-books-schools-in-cameroon-terrorised-by-armed-groups#:~:text=Armed%20separatists%20in%20Cameroon.

and displacing about 250,000 persons.¹² The terrorist groups' attacks in north-east Nigeria have led to approximately 75,000 Nigerian refugees entering Cameroon.¹³ Whilst Cameroon has at times accepted refugees, there are instances such as in January 2019 when thousands of refugees were forced to return to north-east Nigeria.¹⁴

Government Response

Biya's response to the conflict has come in the form of violent crackdowns on protests such as those of 2017 pre-empting and following the announcement of Ambazonian independence. By December 4th 2017, the Cameroonian Government had formally declared war on the separatists, launching an offensive campaign through Ambazonian occupied territory. The subsequent conflict and death of military personnel led to a government response in retaliation in the form of burning of villages, one such example being Mbalangi. The hostile attitude taken by the government can be seen by their insistence upon labeling the separatists as "terrorists", a term which Biya ardently stands by.

Whilst violent approaches have been the Government's central response, it has attempted to find diplomatic solutions. The Major National Dialogue of September 2019 sought to negotiate with opposition parties, but ruled out the option of independence. The dialogue ended in a resounding failure as military activity actually increased in the Anglophone region following its conclusion. Alongside the dialogue, the National Council for Decentralisation was also held, involving 360 local councilors with the aim of "a participatory and objective diagnosis of the organization and functioning of councils".¹⁵ Not much has come of the decentralization approach, however.

The implementation of the Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration program (DDR) in 2018 through which former separatists are rehabilitated and given shelter, was also an attempt to ease tensions. This program extends to ex-fighters of Boko Haram as well, building upon a "peace offer" made to those who lay their weapons down.¹⁶ The placement of a DDR center in central

¹²Elvis Ntui, Arrey. "Cameroon." Crisis Group, 2019, www.crisisgroup.org/africa/central-africa/cameroon.

¹³ "Cameroon Multi-Country Office - Nigerian Refugees." *Global Focus*, reporting.unhcr.org/node/8464.

¹⁴France-Presse, Agence. "Thousands of Nigerian Refugees Fleeing Boko Haram Forced Back by Cameroon." *The Guardian*, 19 Jan. 2019, www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jan/19/thousands-of-nigerian-refugees-fleeing-boko-haram-forced-back-by-cameroon.

¹⁵ Fouda. "National Decentralisation : More Resources for Councils." www.cameroon-Tribune.cm, 18 Sept. 2019, www.cameroon-tribune.cm/article.html/27904/fr.html/national-decentralisation-more-resources-for.

¹⁶ Ngoh Ngoh, Ferdinand. "Press Release: Creation of a National Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Committee for Ex-Fighters of Boko Haram and Armed Groups in the North-West and South-West Regions." www.prc.cm, 30 Nov. 2018, www.prc.cm/en/news/press-releases/3178-press-

Bamenda alongside the marches of the former separatists may also serve as a tool of propaganda in a city cleared out by Operation Bamenda Clean.

Operation Bamenda Clean itself has been attacked by the Cameroonian Bar Association, which has criticized the military's approach to the campaign, citing instances of extortion and civilian intimidation. The military has, however, reasserted its respect for human rights and denied any accusations. The lack of power which the Bar wields has allowed the Cameroonian military to act in a manner which is potentially beyond its powers.

Cameroon officially declared war on Boko Haram in 2016. In its approach, the Rapid Intervention Battalion plays a crucial role, acting with US support as a more elite unit than the remainder of the Cameroonian army with a particular focus on the Boko Haram conflict. The unit has, however, been accused of the use of illegal prisons with "detainees subjected to severe beatings, agonizing stress positions and drownings, with some tortured to death".¹⁷ The base in Salak has been particularly mentioned as a location of abuses and the deaths of prisoners. There have been calls by Amnesty International for US and French intervention due to their prominent role in Cameroonian military operations. In 2017, US Africa Command launched an investigation into the allegations, but the results are inconclusive, and the US maintains that it has not received any reports to support the claims.

Current Issues and Causes

Governance

Cameroon lacks an alternative to Biya's approach because there is no opposition, and when there is it is suppressed. For example, Paul Abine Ayah, a former member of Biya's own party, advocated for federalism which led to his detention. The limited freedom of expression for alternative approaches compared to the central government makes the situation difficult to resolve. Additionally, the government itself remains corrupt with senior member Ephraim Inoni accused of embezzlement and exploitation of neopatrimonialism in 2013, in which the rulers of the State exploit the profits of their own public office for personal gain.

The lack of decentralized authority can lead to ineffective rule and feelings of discontent amongst those who feel abandoned by the government, such as Ambazonia. As a young democracy, Cameroon remains incomplete in its institutions and means of governance. The constitutional ambiguity in which

release-creation-of-a-national-disarmament-demobilization-and-reintegration-committee-for-ex-fighters-of-boko-haram-and-armed-groups-in-the-north-west-and-south-west-%20regions.

¹⁷ "Cameroon: Amnesty Report Reveals War Crimes in Fight against Boko Haram, Including Horrific Use of Torture." Amnesty International, 20 July 2017, www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2017/07/cameroon-amnesty-report-reveals-war-crimes-in-fight-against-boko-haram-including-horrific-use-of-torture/.

two separate contradicting successors to the role of head of state which may both be technically applicable shows the insecurity of political power in Cameroon. Equally, the massive parliamentary majority of the CPDM means that Biya may alter the constitution whenever he pleases with limited barriers to this approach, as shown in the 2008 constitutional amendment. With almost sole power vested in one person with the power to alter the foundational rules of a nation with such ease, it is questionable whether Cameroon is truly democratic. This power becomes a concern especially in terms of military intervention.

Military

Alongside the government's violent suppression of protests, there are internal, ongoing issues with the Cameroonian system. The military has been responsible for the burning of villages, torture of prisoners, and alongside a deeply corrupt structure, this can only indicate the potential for further violent altercations within the country. Equally, a powerfully disobedient military may undermine the power of government. The issues seen during Operation Bamenda Clean, such as the Cameroonian military's killing of two teenage civilians on December 22, 2021 are emblematic of the lack of repercussions for military disobedience. Alongside the aforementioned issues with Rapid Intervention Battalion, the military functions above the law or exempt from persecution.

Human Rights

The safety of reporters and journalists is tenuous in warzones, yet in Cameroon there is even the risk of government persecution, such as in the cases of Paul Chouta and Emmanuel Mbombog Mbog Matip, who were held on defamation charges for 23 and 16 months respectively.¹⁸ Access to accurate and up to date information is increasing globally and allows for faster responses and further opportunities for international cooperation.

The restrictions put on those living in Anglophone provinces, such as on the anniversary of their declared independence among which were "suspending public transportation, closing businesses and public places, and banning gatherings of over four people" serve to dehumanize and potentially further the pre-existing issues.¹⁹ Additionally, the government's intentional blockages of the internet in Anglophone regions further alienates and isolates

¹⁸ "Harsh Sentences for Opposition Protesters; Journalists and TV Programme Suspended - CIVICUS - Tracking Conditions for Citizen Action." Monitor.civicus.org, 15 Apr. 2022, monitor.civicus.org/updates/2022/04/15/harsh-sentences-opposition-protesters-journalists-and-tv-programme-suspended/.

¹⁹ Africa Center for Strategic Studies. "Growing Instability in Cameroon Raises Fundamental Questions about the State." Africa Center for Strategic Studies, 8 Oct. 2018, africacenter.org/spotlight/growing-instability-cameroon-raises-fundamental-questions-about-state/#:~:text=The%20exodus%20has%20accelerated%20with.

a part of the Cameroonian population, stripping people of what is arguably a crucial part of modern livelihood.

Conclusion

To summarize, the situation in Cameroon stems from a deep-rooted cultural and linguistic division, alongside the militancy of NSAGs engaged in guerilla warfare against the central government. These issues are exacerbated and rooted in the structures of Cameroonian governance and the political power dynamic within the country. To find a solution, one must be aware of the complexity of the situation, yet realistic in one's appraisal. Cameroon, as a nation plagued by corruption and a lack of democracy, is in need of a solution to its crises, which may disarm and stabilize the scenario.

MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED

Cameroon

The government of Cameroon under the leadership of Paul Biya takes the position that negotiation and peace via diplomacy are no longer options with separatist forces. The failure of the Major National Dialogue solidified this perspective. Such a position has led to a prolonging of the conflict, especially due to the Government policy to retake occupied urban areas but have a less aggressive policy against rural insurgency.

As Premier for 40 years, Biya has a complete grasp over every vestige of Cameroonian governance and has a deep influence over its policy. Cameroon is unwilling to make a return to a system of federalism in the interests of stability yet has made attempts through the DDR to reintegrate violent insurgents. Cameroon seeks peace from the conflicts which plague it but is ultimately unwilling to compromise on the centrality of governance and military action as its main diplomatic tool.

Switzerland

Switzerland has attempted to act as a neutral arbiter for negotiations between Cameroon and the Ambazonian separatist movement. Such an attempt failed as not all parties were willing to participate in the diplomatic process. This shows the global significance of the issue at hand and the willingness of an entirely external power to offer assistance to a struggling state. Switzerland seeks to resolve the conflict via diplomacy through its facilitation of talks, however, cannot proceed without the cooperation of all parties. The Swiss facilitation process culminated in a “meeting with various Cameroonian opposition groups [which] took place in Switzerland between 25 and 27 June 2019”.²⁰ These talks inevitably fell through and failed to make any progress from the current stalemate.

²⁰ Government of Switzerland. “Swiss Facilitation Process in Cameroon - Cameroon.” ReliefWeb, 27 June 2020, reliefweb.int/report/cameroon/swiss-facilitation-process-cameroon.

United Kingdom (UK)

The UK, as the former colonial power in the Southern Cameroons, has a responsibility for the disunity within the current Cameroonian state. Its role in the partition of the British Cameroons, alongside its limited involvement in Cameroonian affairs following independence in 1961 compared with the French, has contributed to the repression of the Anglophone population.

The current British High Commission in Cameroon maintains and develops the relationship between the two countries. Through their shared commonwealth relations and commercial connections, the UK has interests in the region and aims to maintain stability. The UK has in the past sought to support “sustainable democratic reform, challenging corruption, supporting adherence to international human rights standards.”²¹ The UK is in support of putting pressure on Biya’s government and encouraging and facilitating peace negotiations, to ‘talk not fight’.²²

France

France is in a similar position to the UK, since it has a direct connection to the crisis as a former colonial power. It had, however, sustained influence in Cameroon even after its relinquishing of power through French advisors, military involvement through the war with the UPC until the 1970s, and continued military support and political advisors even now. This has led to French support for the Cameroon government and to align itself with its approach.

France is the greatest contributor of Foreign Direct Investment into Cameroon and serves as one of its closest European allies. Emmanuel Macron and Biya have a working relationship and have in the past communicated over the Anglophone Crisis. France is keen to resolve the ongoing conflict and has supported the Cameroonian Government's attempts at peace, condemning separatist actions. The cultural links between Cameroon and France remain very significant in the closeness of their relationship. France has in recent years been urged to “up its engagement in resolving Cameroon's Anglophone crisis” by human rights advocates in 2019 but has been reluctant to engage in the Anglophone crisis actively and openly.²³

United States of America (USA)

The USA as a major economic power has offered support for the peoples of Cameroon through its granting of temporary deportation relief to Cameroonians. This period of relief began on April 14, 2022 and will last for 18 months. Since Cameroonian independence the US has been a continual contributor of aid, with the US Embassy in the capital providing educational and cultural exchanges, aid budgets and even Covid-

²¹ British High Commission Yaounde. “British High Commission Yaounde - GOV.UK.” www.gov.uk, www.gov.uk/world/organisations/british-high-commission-yaounde.

²² Fearnley, Jackie, and Arkady Silverman. The Global Campaign for Peace and Justice in Cameroon – Written Evidence. 3 2019, committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/768/html/.

²³ Mules, Inekke. “France’s Macron Urged to Take Action in Cameroon Anglophone Crisis | DW | 12.11.2019.” DW.COM, 11 Dec. 2019, www.dw.com/en/frances-macron-urged-to-take-action-in-cameroon-anglophone-crisis/a-51215741.

19 vaccines. The US Senate also passed a resolution calling for the cessation of violence in Cameroon from both parties to the conflict.²⁴ The USA provides military advice to the Cameroonian forces, notably the Rapid Intervention Battalion. Its recent investigation of the Rapid Intervention Battalion in 2017 and its eventual denial of human rights violations does, however, indicate that it maintains a tentative stance on the situation. The USA has in recent years criticized Biya's "centralizing authority" and the human rights violations enacted by the government.²⁵

Nigeria

The two countries have in the past been at odds over the Bakassi peninsula, however, in recent years the issue has reached a supposed resolution. Nigeria, as a bordering nation embroiled in similar conflicts such as that of IPOB and the Boko Haram insurgency, is in support of stability in Cameroon. In recent years, large numbers of refugees have moved between the two countries due to the various ongoing wars. Cameroon as a close trade partner who has helped Nigeria by taking in refugees is an important country for relations.

Nigeria, in its extradition of the Ambazonia Governing Council leadership from the Nera Hotel, showed its support to the Cameroonian Government. Although it later went back on the decision, deeming it unconstitutional due to their appeal for asylum, Nigerian support is not unwavering.

African Union (AU)

The African Union is an intergovernmental organization which seeks to support African development. The AU's continental aims of "promoting Africa's growth and economic development by championing citizen inclusion and increased cooperation and integration of African states" are similar to its regional goals in Cameroon.²⁶ It gives Cameroon a forum to discuss with other African nations and participate in international decisions. The AU has assisted Cameroon in its development as an emerging democracy. It has recently supported the 2020 legislative and municipal elections via a Short-Term African Union Electoral Observation Mission, helping to ensure the fairness of the process. The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights published a report in 2018 urging countries within the AU to play an active role in resolving the crisis, calling for peace in the afflicted regions in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon.

Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF)

The OIF is an international organization where a significant proportion of its member populations are French-speaking. It was formed in 1970 and serves to facilitate

²⁴ 116th Congress, "S.RES. 684", Senate of the United States, 11 Jan. 2021, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-resolution/684/text#:~:text=684-,Calling%20on%20the%20Government%20of%20Cameroon%20and%20separatist%20armed%20groups,civil%20conflict%20in%20Anglophone%20Cameroon.>

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ "Cameroon | African Union." Au.int, au.int/en/memberstates/cameroon.

relations between the numerous Member States. It has allowed Cameroon to establish diplomatic and international connections following its independence. In 2018 the Secretary General of the OIF said it would continue to support “education, the youths, the digital era, and the processes linked to the politics and security of Cameroon”.²⁷ This has been done through Cameroonian involvement in the Local Development Support Francophone Programme (PROFADEL) since 2017. The prolonged French influence in Cameroon has been maintained following the French elimination of German colonial vestiges, with the permeation of French culture.

UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC)

The UNHRC has sought to tackle the refugee crisis in Cameroon, an issue which has increased instability in the country. In January 2022, the UNHRC sought \$59.6 million for the support of the 100,000 refugees displaced by the conflict with Boko Haram in northern Cameroon.²⁸ These funds would go towards providing protection and assistance to those displaced by the crisis. The climate crisis has exacerbated these preexisting problems and furthered the impact of dwindling water resources. This effort aims to save the lives of the displaced Cameroonians, yet general global support from other states or organizations remains limited, and the extent of influence the funding has does not address the root of the problem, that being the conflict.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

DATE	DESCRIPTION OF EVENT
17 August 1884 - 10 March 1916	The German Colony of “Kamerun” (Cameroon) is established by the partition of Africa, and subsequently surrendered following the First World War.
11 March 1913	The Anglo-German Treaty is signed by which Britain cedes the Bakassi Peninsula to Germany.
10 July 1919	The transferal of trusteeship from Germany via the League of Nations Mandate to France (Cameroon) and UK (Northern Cameroons and Southern Cameroons) at the Treaty of Versailles occurs.
11 February 1961	Referendums are held, determining that Northern Cameroons would join Nigeria, whilst Southern Cameroons would join Cameroon.

²⁷ “International Organisation of La Francophonie to Contribute in Cameroon’s Stability.” www.prc.cm, May 2018, www.prc.cm/en/news/audiences/3523-international-organisation-of-la-francophonie-to-contribute-in-cameroon-s-stability.

²⁸ “Cameroon Multi-Country Office - Nigerian Refugees.” Global Focus, 2017, reporting.unhcr.org/node/8464.

20 May 1972	Ahidjo's constitution passes, removing the post of Vice President and bringing an end to Cameroonian federalism.
11 October 1992	The First multi-party elections are held, although widespread allegations of electoral fraud are attributed to Biya's victory by the opposition.
29 April - 2 May 1994	Claims of Southern Cameroon Independence begin following evidence of a lack of clarity in UNGA RES 1608 (XV) asserted at the All-Anglophone Conference in Bamenda.
17 May 1997	Elections are boycotted due to 1992 allegations of electoral fraud, meaning Biya can solidify his position in power.
25-29 February 2008	February Riots call for Biya's resignation building momentum from the transport workers' strike about a proposed constitutional amendment, leaving 40 dead.
10 April 2008	Amendment to the constitution allows the President to serve indefinite terms.
2013	The Ambazonia Governing Council is formed by Ayuk Tabe.
September 2017	Cameroonian protests are accompanied by armed conflict with Government forces.
1 October 2017	Independence is declared in Ambazonia and the President is announced.
4 December 2017	Biya declares war on Ambazonian separatists via national address.
1 October 2018	The Cameroonian government imposes restrictive measures on Ambazonia on the anniversary of their independence.
30 September - 4 October 2019	The Major National Dialogue takes place between the involved parties in the Anglophone crisis.
6 January 2018	Major members of the Interim Government of Ambazonia are arrested at the Nera Hotel in Nigeria and extradited back to Cameroon.
10 September 2020 - February 2022	Operation Bamenda Clean, in which the city of Bamenda, with a population of 2 million, is systematically cleared of alleged separatist threats by the Cameroonian military.

PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE

The future of the Trust Territory of the Cameroons under United Kingdom administration [UNGA RES 1608 (XV), 1961]

This resolution affirmed the result of the 1961 referendums on the Cameroonian union. It invited Southern Cameroons and Cameroun to “initiate urgent discussions” on union but failed to formalize it.²⁹ Whilst it gives recognition to the results of the referendums, the referendums themselves were contentious in their lack of scope in offering independence. The UN failed to support the process of unification instead leaving the terms to the “declared policies of the parties concerned”. The UN does bear responsibility for the discrimination and political isolation of the former Southern Cameroons and failed to offer adequate protections at the time.

Swiss Process

The Swiss Process was a suggestion for Switzerland to become a neutral arbiter to the conflict in June 2019 and to facilitate talks between Cameroonian authorities and separatists to prevent further escalation. “Switzerland was tasked by a majority of the parties with facilitating an inclusive negotiation process,’ the Swiss foreign affairs department (FDFA) said in a statement following two days of talks with a number of opposition groups.”³⁰ However, not all parties accepted the process, and the non-attendance of groups such as the Ambazonian Defence Force meant that talks fell through with no real progress made.

Cameroon National Committee for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR)

The DDR committee, as discussed in the Background Information section, seeks to reintegrate violent insurgents into society. The system put in place by the government of Cameroon in November 2018 has since opened two centers, one in Buea and the other in Bamenda. These centers in their four years of operation have housed 500 ex-fighters as of June 2022. They came with the promise of reintegration, the teaching of key skills for the job market, yet since their development, armed conflict has only intensified. The centers remain ill-equipped to live up to their initial promises and are not accessible enough for many separatists. “Ex-combatants in the centers in Buea and Bamenda began to complain about the poor living conditions, the lack of training opportunities, and uncertainty about when they could leave.”³¹ The program, whilst a step in the right direction, has, in practice, limited impact on the issues in Cameroon.

²⁹ Sess.: 1960-1961, UN General Assembly (15th. “The Future of the Trust Territory of the Cameroons under United Kingdom Administration.” [Digitallibrary.un.org](https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/206162?ln=en), 1961, digitallibrary.un.org/record/206162?ln=en.

³⁰ Staff, Reuters. “Swiss Government to Mediate Cameroon Peace Talks.” Reuters, 27 June 2019, www.reuters.com/article/us-cameroon-separatists-swiss-idUSKCN1TS2F0.

³¹ Fru, Agha-Nwi, and Andrew Nsoseka. “Broken Promises: Cameroon’s Troubled Disarmament Initiative.” *The New Humanitarian*, 23 June 2022, www.thenewhumanitarian.org/news-feature/2022/06/23/Cameroon-troubled-disarmament-initiative.

The limited accessibility and poor conditions within the two centers reduce their effectiveness significantly, discouraging ex-fighters from either Boko Haram or the separatist movement to engage with the system.



Figure 2: Map of Buea and Bamenda³²

Major National Dialogue

The Major National Dialogue in September 2019 was an attempt by the government to organize and facilitate discussions for peace and a solution to the conflict with the Anglophone regions. It allowed for those at odds with the government to clearly express their aims and their grievances with the current situation. The government, however, ruled out the possibility of discussion of Ambazonian independence from the beginning, a decision that constricted the conference and immediately diminished the other sides' position. The government ignored the requests of the opposition, with the dialogue serving more as a tool of propaganda and a half-hearted attempt, further illuminating the government's arrogance than an actual effort to solve the issues.

UN Security Council (UNSC) Involvement

Members of the UNSC have, in the past, proposed to address the issues in Cameroon. The Dominican Republic, USA, and UK all called for the Anglophone Crisis to be discussed in the Security Council in May 2019, although little to no progress came from the talks. In June 2021 Cameroonian Women appealed to the Security Council to discuss the issues of separatism and the threat posed by the continued escalation of the Boko Haram threat.³³ The Security Council, although possessing binding powers, have struggled to come to a united resolution on the issue with gridlock ensuing on

³² Fru, Agha-Nwi, and Andrew Nsoseka. "Broken Promises: Cameroon's Troubled Disarmament Initiative." *The New Humanitarian*, 23 June 2022, www.thenewhumanitarian.org/news-feature/2022/06/23/Cameroon-troubled-disarmament-initiative.

³³ "Cameroon Women Appeal to the UN Security Council to Discuss Escalating Crises." *VOA*, 5 June 2021, www.voanews.com/a/africa_cameroon-women-appeal-un-security-council-discuss-escalating-crises/6206660.html.

proposed resolutions. France, as a close ally of the Cameroonian government, with the ability to veto, has the potential to block any unfavorable resolution. France had previously vetoed a resolution seeking to resolve its dispute with former colony Comoros over the island of Mayotte, showing that France is prepared to veto issues relating to its former colonies.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

UN involvement and discussion on the Cameroonian government

The failure of Cameroon's response to both separatist and terrorist militarism may be a result of a lack of institutional or infrastructural capabilities. Whilst state and non-state actors such as Canada and the EU have already offered significant economic support, the further lending of political advisors and an inquiry into governmental efficiency may encourage more effective action. Systems such as that of the DDR program, whilst currently ineffective, may function better and achieve their aims with further international support, such as through the support of UN organs. This may be achieved through expansion of the policy through the establishment of further centers or an effort to increase living standards within the facilities. One approach which should be considered would be the launching of a UN mission under the authority of the Disarmament and International Security Committee (GA1), similar to that of the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan. Such a mission may focus on the protections and support of impacted Cameroonian unarmed civilians and attempt to provide humanitarian and human rights support. This body would seek to distribute aid and oversee political and developmental issues within the country.

The issues of government corruption and neopatrimonialism should also be rooted out, considering Cameroon's current democratic integrity. This should be done whilst implementing constitutional reform and a favorable return to the 1961 constitution. The staunchly determined and unmoving position of President Biya is a determining factor in the lack of Cameroonian willingness to cede powers of autonomy to the Ambazonian independence movement, or to that of the general Anglophone one. A UN investigation into levels of corruption or democracy may be useful in ascertaining the degree and impact of this issue. Without functional governance, international security is at risk, as well as further degradation of the issue.

Alternative to the Cameroonian Approach

A resolution to the issues in Cameroon may seek to express its disapproval of Cameroonian central government policy. The violent approach of the government and its violation of international rights through military actions against civilians and torture of prisoners of war. Equally, the government's opposition to cooperation and frequent "villainization" of separatist forces contributes to further tension among both parties, whether or not the claims are true. An international criticism of government policy and an official statement on the prevailing global perspectives of the government's

methods of suppression may be an approach which certain countries may take. Such an action may encourage a de-escalation of Cameroonian military invasive action and lead to an enforced more diplomatic route. One may even go as far as to advocate for international recognition of the separatist movement, with an evaluation of the extent to which their claims are founded. This would put pressure on the Cameroonian Government to engage in international diplomatic processes on the issue.

Demilitarization and Demobilization

The UN assistance mission may also be used in the expansion of DDR centers, improving both capacity and the levels of infrastructure within the facilities. This would improve the potential for the program to function as intended and build upon a pre-existing solution. A discussion of the potential disarmament of the Cameroonian conflict within a body such as the UN Disarmament Commission, or through a committee featuring the main actors from both sides of the conflict, through bilateral agreements may be established. A concerted, united effort to disarm and demilitarize the Anglophone crisis acknowledging the devastating humanitarian implications of the crisis such as civilian casualties and displacement of people. In order to solve the issues faced, a specific council could be set up with the ultimate aim of demilitarizing the Anglophone crisis.

Demilitarization of what the Cameroonian government views as “terrorist” groups may be achieved if the uncontrollable actions of the Cameroonian military are reduced or halted. Dialogue between both the Cameroonian government and the international community should be opened, so that there is greater transparency of policy, as opposed to the currently opaque nature of government action. Whilst previous attempts at diplomatic resolutions such as the Swiss Process and the Major National Dialogue failed in their aims, a UN backed effort at diplomacy may elevate the importance of the discussion, with a potential for international affirmation of agreed upon terms. Talks observed by UN officials may be beneficial, in that impartiality is implied and that discussions may be held without the risk of further altercations. External international representatives may be able to assist in discussions by providing incentives for disarmament or support for efforts at stability to bring the government of Cameroon to a position where open dialogue may be held. Many UN member states have expressed their concern over the actions of the government of Cameroon, a perspective highlighted in the May 2019 discussion in the UNSC, so discussion can only be viable when taking the Cameroonian government into account.

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