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This statement is delivered by *Forum des Femmes Autochtones du Cameroun* non-profit, civil society organization set up to advance and advocate for the respect of human rights of indigenous people especially indigenous women and girls in Cameroon. Consultations were conducted with leaders of indigenous peoples' organizations as well as other stakeholders for the elaboration of this statement.

This statement addresses the following issues:

- (1) -The Right to peace and protection of Human Rights of Indigenous peoples
- (2) - Their participation in Public affairs
- (3)- The Right to Education of Indigenous Children

ISSUE 1 - Human Rights Violations and abuses towards the Mbororo pastoralist in the Anglophone crises

In the previous review, five countries (Slovakia, Netherlands, United Kingdom, Poland, and United States of America) gave general recommendations regarding the respect of human rights in the Anglophone region.

The Government implemented some of them but the crises still persist and according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, (OCHA) 715,000 persons are still displaced and suffered from abuses and violations and in need of food, water, health and education - amongst whom are the indigenous Mbororo pastoralists,

Between 2018 to 2021 cases of human rights violation and abuses of Indigenous mbororo peoples were registered in the seven divisions of the North West Region, according to Laimaru Network, an umbrella organization for indigenous and minority groups.

Figures showing 2,242 cattle killed, 485 goats and horses slaughtered, 122 indigenous Mbororo people kidnapped and 179,251,050 FCFA paid as ransom, and 182 killed. Also, 168 families have been left dependent, 7,827 left as IDP, 874 affected houses, with 4,692 children and 976 women seriously affected.

New developments

In the Adamawa region as compared to 2018, the number of the victims of kid napping and ransom taking has reduced due to the intervention of the government and between 2019 to 2022, 750 internally displaced persons were registered, 54 kidnapped, 5 killed, 406 cattle stolen, and over 49,000,000 FCFA paid as ransom according to the Mbororo social and Cultural Development Association.

Considering the above situation, we recommend to the Government of Cameroon to:

1. Head to head count of all the victims who have lost their cattle, houses and other materials to include them in the national reconstruction plan in order to compensate them.
2. Provides psycho-social support to the IDPs and enroll their children in public establishment for free.
3. Deploy more security forces to remote villages to reinforce the protection of the population and to rigorously track down kidnappers.

ISSUE 2 Participation in Public Affairs of Indigenous peoples

In the previous review, two countries made the following recommendations.

Bulgaria; To take steps for the adequate representation of women in political life and encourage their economic empowerment,

Angola; To take concrete measures to strengthen the participation of women and minority groups in public life.

However, there has been an improvement in the participation of Indigenous peoples in the electoral process since the last review. Elections Cameroon organizes proximity campaigns for indigenous peoples to register on the electoral registers and withdraw their electoral cards, organizes regular consultations and the putting in place a National permanent platform with different stakeholders for free, transparent, peaceful and inclusive elections.

The Nomination of two alternate Senators who are indigenous persons by the President of the Republic during the last Senatorial elections.

The contribution of civil society organizations has also contributed to - an increased in the number of municipal councilors to **58, Regional councilors 10, Alternate senators 3 as compared to the previous years.**

New Development

We still observe a very low representation of Indigenous peoples in areas of decision making. only **one indigenous person** out of **360 mayors**, **0 indigenous person out of 180 parliamentarians**, **0 indigenous person out of 100 senators**, **0 indigenous person amongst 10 president of Regional Councils**, and **0 indigenous women representation in all the organs**. Their low participation is due to lack of identification documents, low level of education, lack of information and ignorance about their rights to participate, inaccessibility of communities, the weight of culture and tradition.

We therefore recommend to the Government of Cameroon to;

1 -Establish a quota or percentage of Indigenous peoples in every electoral list during Municipal, Regional, Legislative and Senatorial elections

2 -Facilitates the obtention of different identification documents like Birth Certificate and National Identity Cards to enable indigenous people to participate effectively in the electoral process

3- Revision of the Electoral Code to consider the specificity of indigenous people's culture and way of life.

ISSUE 3 - The Right to Education of Indigenous children

During the previous review 13 countries made the following recommendations

Madagascar: set up a national action plan and a strategy aimed at ensuring that the minorities have equal access to appropriate school programs that respect their way of life and culture.

-2 countries: Continue efforts to implement the 2013-2020 Strategy Paper for the Education Sector in order to improve school enrolment rates (Libya and Bulgaria)

-8 countries: Guarantee all children on an equal footing free primary education (Congo, Madagascar, Lesotho, Portugal, Togo, Iceland, Serbia and Armenia)

-3 countries: Ratify the UNESCO convention on the fight against discrimination (Congo, Madagascar and Afghanistan)

Little process has been made following the recommendations. There has been the recruitment of some teachers but still not sufficient for the whole country.

New Developments

School curricula not adapted to indigenous peoples specificity, many children have dropped out to follow the cattles in search for greener pasture, many children no longer go to school because they cannot afford to pay the PTA fees, Many of the children who have certificates find it difficult to find a jobs. More than 70% of the schools are closed in the crises region due to the ongoing crises. 80 percent of the girls have abandoned school and are forced into early mariages because of poverty and economic hardship according to a documentry presented by FFAC in 2019

We hereby make the following recommendations to Cameroon,

1 -Recruitment of Qualify teachers in quantity and equipment of primary schools with the suspension of parent teachers Associations (PTA) fees

2 - Instauration of a quota or percentage for indigenous children during the recruitment in the different concours of the public service.

3 -Take into consideration the way of life and culture of Indigenous children in the elaboration of school curricula

Thank you for your Kind Attention