

COMMISSION DES DROITS
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Secrétariat Permanent

Division de la Protection
et de la Promotion des Droits de l'homme

B.P./P.O. Box 20317, Yaoundé
Fax: (237) 222-22-60-82

Numéro Vert : 1523



CAMEROON HUMAN
RIGHTS COMMISSION

SUB-COMMISSION IN CHARGE
OF HUMAN RIGHTS PROMOTION

Permanent Secretariat

Human Rights Protection
and Promotion Division

Tel. : (237) 222-22-61-17 / 691 12 86 70
E-mail : chrc.cdhc2019@yahoo.com
Web: www.cdhc.cm

Toll-Free Number: 1523

STATEMENT BY THE CAMEROON HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
TO MARK THE 25TH INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE
ELIMINATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

25 November 2024

Theme.- *Responding and Recovering from Violence*

The Cameroon Human Rights Commission (hereinafter: “the Commission” or “the CHRC”), established by Law No. 2019/014 of 19 July 2019 and rendered operational on 29 April 2021, following the swearing in of its members before the Supreme Court sitting in joint benches,

Bearing in mind that the annual celebration of the *International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women* is an opportunity to pay tribute to the three Mirabal sisters - Patria, Minerva and Maria Teresa from Salcedo (Dominican Republic), aged 36, 34 and 25 respectively, political opponents of the dictatorial regime of Rafael Leonidas Trujillo (1930-1961) founded on terror and corruption. On 25 November 1960, while « *returning from visiting their husbands, who were imprisoned for political reasons, they were clubbed to death by Trujillo's agents [who after] beating them to death [put their bodies in a car] , and then pushed off a cliff* »¹,

Bearing in mind also that 25 November marks the beginning of the campaign for the international *16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence*, launched by activists at the inauguration of the Women's Global Leadership Institute in 1991²

¹ See The Conversation, « L'assassinat des sœurs MIRABAL : aux origines de la Journée internationale contre les violences faites aux femmes », <https://theconversation.com/l'assassinat-des-soeurs-mirabal-aux-origines-de-la-journee-internationale-contre-les-violences-faites-aux-femmes-224897>, accessed on 3 November 2024.

² See UN Women, « Concept note of to mark the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, 25 November – 10 December 2024 : Towards 30 Years of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action »,

Emphasizing that, further to the above-mentioned international campaign, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), by Resolution No. A/RES/48/104 of 20 December 1993, adopted the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, through which it “urges that every effort be made so that it becomes generally known and respected”³, and later by Resolution No. A/RES/52/86 of 12 December 1997⁴, established the *Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Measures to Eliminate Violence against Women*,

Emphasizing also that the United Nations General Assembly through Resolution No. A/RES/54/134 of 17 December 1999 proclaimed 25 November as the *International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women*, to call upon all actors concerned, including “Governments, the relevant agencies, bodies, funds and programs of the United Nations system, and other international organizations and non-governmental organizations, to organize on that day activities designed to raise public awareness of the problem of violence against women”⁵,

Noting that the *UNiTE by 2030 initiative to end violence against women*, launched in 2008 under the leadership of António Guterres, the United Nations Secretary General, and managed by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), was created to support the *16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence* campaign. This initiative is described as “a multi-year advocacy effort to prevent and eliminate violence against women and girls around the world. *UNiTE* calls on governments, development actors, civil society, women’s rights organisations, young people, the private sector, media and the entire UN system to join forces to address violence against women and girls”,⁶

Considering that on 18 November this year, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, António Guterres, the United Nations Secretary General, noted with regret that:

The epidemic of violence against women and girls shames humanity. Every day, an average of 140 women and girls are killed by someone in their own family. Around one in three

published on the site https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2024-11/unite_campaign_16_days_concept_2024_fr.pdf, accessed on 20 November 2024.

³ See UNGA, Resolution A/RES/48/104 of 20 December 1993 on the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, published on the site <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/declaration-elimination-violence-against-women>, accessed on 20 November 2024.

⁴ See UNGA, Resolution No. A/RES/52/86 of 12 December 1997 on Crime prevention and criminal justice measures to eliminate violence against women, published on the site, https://www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/CCPCJ/Crime_Resolutions/1990/1999/1997/General_Assembly/A-RES-52-86.pdf, accessed on 20 November 2024.

⁵ See UNGA, Resolution No. A/RES/54/134 of 17 December 1999 on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, published on the site <https://documents.un.org/doc/undocgen/n00/271/22/pdf/n0027122.pdf>, accessed on 20 November 2024.

⁶ See UN Women, «UNITED to End Violence against Women initiative», <https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/unite#:~:text=Notre%20travail-Campagne%20TOUS%20UNiS%20pour%20mettre%20fin%20à%20l%27égard%20des%20femmes&text=L%27initiative%20«%20TOUS%20UNiS%20pour,filles%20dans%20le%20monde%20entier>, accessed on 20 November 2024.

women still suffers physical or sexual violence. No country or community is immune [a]nd the situation is getting worse [...] Horrific sexual violence is being used as a weapon of war [a]nd women and girls face a torrent of online misogyny. The situation is compounded by a growing backlash against women and girls' rights. All too often, legal protections are being rolled back, human rights are being trampled on, [...]'⁷,

Considering also that, Mr António Guterres reminded everyone that:

[a]lmost 30 years since the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action promised to prevent and eliminate violence against women and girls [urging everyone that] it's beyond time to deliver [and by calling all actors to] urgent action for justice and accountability, and support for advocacy⁸,

Warmly welcoming the theme of the 25th International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women *Responding and Recovering from Violence*, which highlights the urgent action needed to prevent violence, end confirmed cases of violence against women and girls, hold perpetrators accountable, and support victims or parties with rights in their pursuit of justice and reparation, enabling them to lead lives free from violence. This theme is all the more pertinent, as effective violence prevention and adequate victim support requires promoting social change, ensuring sufficient financial resources, and strengthening legal protections for those affected⁹,

Recalling that according to Article 1 of the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, the term "violence against women" means:

any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life,

Recalling also the provisions of Article 2 of the aforementioned Declaration, which complement the definition in Article 1 by non-exhaustively quoting various forms of violence based on the setting or context of occurrence, and making explicit that violence against women could be physical, sexual and psychological as cited below:

- a) [...] occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation
- b) [...] occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women and forced prostitution
- c) [...] perpetrated or condoned by the State, wherever it occurs,

Noting that the action verbs used in the theme of this celebration, *respond and recover*, urge relevant stakeholders to take concrete action, in line with the speech made by Dr Natalia Kanem, Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA),

⁷ See Press release No. SG/SM/22461 of 18 November 2024, "International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women: the world must heed this call, urges the Secretary General" , <https://press.un.org/en/2024/sgsm22461.doc.htm>, accessed on 20 November 2024.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ See *Seize (16) jours contre la violence basée sur le genre, "Thème central"*, <https://www.16jours.ch/theme-central#:~:text=Dans%20le%20cadre%20des%20%C2%AB%2016,pour%20une%20soci%C3%A9t%C3%A9%20sans%20violence>, accessed on 3 November 2024.

on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women in 2023, in which she stated that: “*Violence against women and girls is completely preventable. We can end this crisis by acting in solidarity with the growing numbers of people who are standing up and saying, ‘enough’*”,¹⁰

Noting also that this theme is consistent with the actions that make up the UNiTE initiative, which calls on state actors, development partners, civil society organisations (CSOs) and communities to:

- End impunity by holding perpetrators accountable and establishing zero tolerance for violence against women and girls
- Invest in prevention and women’s rights organisations to ensure survivors’ rights and access to essential services
- Adopt, implement and fund national action plans to end violence against women and girls¹¹

The Commission welcomes the efforts of the government and civil society to halt the rise in and end the violence against women in the Cameroonian society, including:

- the holding of the *first preparatory meeting for the 18th anniversary of the campaign for the “16 Days of Activism against Violence against Women and Girls”* organised by the Ministry of Women’s Empowerment and the Family (MINPROFF), on 15 November 2024 in Yaoundé
- the organisation of an *awareness-raising campaign against sexual violence* by the Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) The Mission, with the support of psychologists, gynaecologists and volunteers, at the Government Bilingual High School, Bonaberi-Douala, in the Littoral Region, on 6 November 2024. The campaign aimed to provide quality support for the prevention of sexual violence, and remedy to those affected by the impact of the phenomenon. The young girls underwent gynaecological and psychological consultations, and HIV/AIDS screening¹²
- the organisation by MINPROFF, in partnership with UN Women, of a workshop on the Integration of Gender in the Defence Forces from 5 to 7 June 2024. The aim of this workshop was not only to strengthen the capacity to combat gender-based violence (GBV) within the services and social centres of the Ministry of Defence throughout the country, addressing the needs of all women affected by GBV in the Defence Forces, but also to strengthen the capacity of local actors to create a protective environment against violence against women

¹⁰ UNFPA, “16 days of activism against Gender-Based Violence”, published online on 27 November 2023 on the site <https://www.unfpa.org/en/16days>, accessed on 20 November 2024.

¹¹ UN Women, “16 Days of activism against Gender-Based violence”, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/rejoignez-nous/16-jours-d-activisme>, accessed on 20 November 2024.

¹² See *Cameroon Web*, “Campaign against sexual violence at Government Bonaberi Bilingual High School Bonaberi”, <https://www.cameroonweb.com/CameroonHomePage/NewsArchive/Campagne-contre-les-violences-sexuelles-au-lyc-e-bilingue-de-Bonaberi-774054>, accessed on 3 November 2024.

- the official ceremony to launch the drafting process of a law against gender-based violence, at the Hilton Hotel in Yaoundé, on 7 November 2023. This ceremony, which was initiated by MINPROFF, marked the starting point of enacting a law that clearly identifies the specific nature of GBV, how to respond more effectively to this hideous crime and significantly reduce this scourge in our country. The draft bill referred to has been revised multiple times and modified following consultations with the stakeholders involved in the process,

The Commission unequivocally denounces the alarming resurgence of acts of violence against women and young girls brought to its attention since 26 November 2023. These ruthless acts have inflicted grave violations upon their physical and moral integrity, with some resulting in untimely, always cruel and sometimes horrific deaths. Some specific cases include:

- the physical abuse inflicted on Ms Bernadette Aba'a Amougou, a resident of Oding, in the South Region, by her partner Mr Charles Ndi, with whom she has been living in a marital relationship for 22 years and with whom she has five children. The victim has been subjected to violence at the hands of her by her partner since 2011. On the night of Thursday, 3 October 2024, the accused inflicted violent blows with his fist upon the victim, resulting to her loss of consciousness. This incident occurred in the presence of their 11-year-old daughter. The CHRC South Branch issued two summonses for a hearing with the accused on 25 and 29 October 2024 respectively and another summons for a hearing with the complainant on 4 November 2024. During the hearing with Ms Bernadette Aba'a Amougou, she informed the Branch Office that a meeting was held on 30 October 2024 in the presence of the families of the two parties. The result of this meeting was an agreement that Ms Aba'a would leave the accused's home to settle elsewhere for her safety and that she would only return with Mr Ndi after the bride price was paid and a marriage certificate was signed
- the cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment inflicted on a five-year-old girl by her aunt in the Akwa Nord quarters of Douala, in the Littoral Region, on 24 September 2024. The girl was rescued by the housekeeper who alerted her neighbours. The neighbours discovered that the victim had burns from an iron and a knife, as well as wounds and scars from beatings¹³. The CHRC Littoral Branch, informed of the situation, carried out an investigation on the same day and was informed that the victim had been taken to Deido Hospital for appropriate treatment and that her aunt had been arrested and detained at the 9th District Police Station in Douala. The case against the accused is still under investigation

¹³ See *ESBI Media*, “*Maltraitance infantile : une fillette torturée par sa tante à Douala*”, <https://esbimedia.com/maltraitance-enfantile-une-fillette-torturee-par-sa-tante-a-douala/>, accessed on 3 November 2024.

- the physical abuse inflicted in June 2024 on Ms Jacqueline Moune, a shopkeeper living in Kongola in the Far North Region, by Mr Jean Garga, her partner with whom she has been living as a couple since 2015. Her cohabitee was considering taking a second wife and inflicted both physical and psychological violence on the victim while depriving her of the means necessary for her medical care after she had suffered two miscarriages. During its investigations the CHRC Far North Branch summoned Mr Garga to give his version of the facts alleged against him. On 22 July 2024, the respondent complied with the summons and, after an unsuccessful attempt to reconcile the parties, the CHRC noted their shared desire to end their relationship
- the cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment inflicted on a young girl named Lysette Claudia Ndi, that brought into the spotlight her mother, Lysette Flore Ndi Tsimi, a psychologist who often was a guest on the TV programme "*Et si on en parlait*" broadcasted on the Cameroon Radio and Television (CRTV). On 5 May 2024, the latter subjected her daughter to corporal punishment, including flogging and burning her buttocks with an iron. This resulted in significant injuries and evidence of the use of whips on the victim's body. The Centre Branch of the CHRC conducted a self-initiated investigation into the case and a fact-finding mission to the 19th District Public Security Police Station of Yaoundé, where Ms Lysette Ndi was held in custody, on 8 May 2024, and to the legal department of the Mfoundi High Court, on 17 May 2024. During this mission, the Centre Branch of the CHRC was informed that on 15 May 2024, Ms Ndi was charged and placed in pre-trial detention at the Yaoundé Central Prison. The CHRC is monitoring the judicial procedure at the said court with the support of a lawyer from the Cameroon Bar Association, with whom it collaborates for the defence of the victim
- the physical, moral and economic violence inflicted on Mrs Kanse Obam Engolo, resident in Ébolowa, in the South Region, with the involvement of her husband, Mr Jean Claude Kanse. On 30 January 2024, the victim received the sum of 52,000 CFA francs from her husband to go to the village and cultivate a farm of melon seeds, and she was forced to go with her five-year-old daughter. When Mrs Obam Engolo refused to take her daughter to the village, her husband beat and locked her and her daughter up in their house and deprived them of food. Furthermore, the accused took the sum of 50,000 CFA francs from his wife's wallet. Informed of this case, the CHRC South Branch assisted Mrs Obam Engolo in filing a complaint against her husband at the Ébolowa Central Police Station and on 1 February 2024. Following a confrontation and an attempt at conciliation between the parties, Mr Kanse promised not to use violence against his wife and immediately returned the sum of 50,000 CFA francs that he had taken from her purse
- the case of Ms Brenda Nouping, who lived for five years with Mr Donald Youdjeu in Doumé in the East Region, with whom she had two children. The victim claims that, in December 2023, her partner, who suspected her of infidelity, inflicted several acts of physical violence on her and that, following an argument between the two

notorious cohabitants on the evening of 31 December 2023, Ms Nouping was thrown out with her children. On 3 January 2024, the victim first brought the matter to the attention of the Sub-Divisional Officer of Doumé, who invited the accused for an attempt at conciliation and referred the two parties to the Social Affairs Service. This did not result in a solution acceptable to the victim. The CHRC East Branch summoned Mr. Youdjeu for a hearing on 25 January 2024. At the end of the conciliation sessions organised at the Branch Office between the two parties, the accused agreed to pay the sum of 300,000 CFA francs claimed by Ms Nouping as child support for their children,

Bearing in mind the cases of femicide which have been brought to the attention of the Commission and which it condemns in the strongest terms, some of the most flagrant being:

- the case of Rose Chebou, a pregnant woman whose lifeless body was found on 24 November 2024, in the Douala Pk 13 neighbourhood, Littoral Region. The victim was stabbed by unknown assailants who had robbed her of her belongings while she was returning home from work¹⁴
- the fatal attack on Mrs Diane Belinga, mother of a five-month-old girl, in Douala, Littoral Region, on 3 November 2024, killed at the entrance to her home by an unknown man who, after stabbing her in the stomach, took her mobile phone and money¹⁵
- the discovery of the partially burnt body of a woman in a rubbish bin at Rond-point Petit Pays at Makèpè in Douala, Littoral Region, on 1 November 2024¹⁶
- the killing of Mrs Frida Joko, 2nd Deputy Mayor of Bamenda 2 in the North-West Region by secessionist terrorists who abducted the victim from her home in *Savannah Street*, Bamenda, on 26 October 2024, as she returned from the screening of a documentary movie on President Paul Biya titled “*Paul BIYA, un grand homme d’État, au destin prodigieux*”. Her remains were found in a pool of blood, in Nchuobo, on 28 October 2024. In a press release dated 28 October 2024, the Senior Divisional Officer for Mezam “*strongly condemned this atrocity committed against an unarmed civilian, brave woman who served her community and her country with great patriotism and devotion*”¹⁷

¹⁴ See *Cameroun Web*, « Une femme enceinte éventrée à Douala », <https://www.camerounweb.com/CameroonHomePage/NewsArchive/Une-femme-enceinte-ventr-e-Douala-775125>, accessed on 24 November 2024.

¹⁵ See *Canal 2 Play tv*, “*Vent meurtrier à Douala*”, <https://2play.cm/detailarticle/1361/Vent%20meurtrier%20%C3%A0%20Douala>, accessed on 3 November 2024.

¹⁶ See *Cameroun Web*, « Douala : Macabre découverte d'un corps calciné à Makepe Petit Pays », <https://www.camerounweb.com/CameroonHomePage/NewsArchive/Douala-Macabre-d-couverte-d-un-cors-calcin-Makepe-Petit-Pays-773801>, accessed on 3 November 2024.

¹⁷ Cf. *Actu Cameroun*, « Bamenda 2 : l'adjointe du maire, Frida JOKO enlevée et assassinée », <https://actucameroun.com/2024/10/28/bamenda-2-ladjointe-du-maire-joko-frida-enlevee-et-assassinee/>, accessed on 3 November 2024.

- the death of Prof Vivian Bongka Tah, a lecturer and researcher at the University of Bamenda, on 28 October 2024 at the Douala General Hospital in the Littoral Region, as a result of an acid attack perpetrated by her companion, Pastor Elias Ebai, on 12 October 2024. The victim's threat to end her relationship with her assailant, Mr Elias Ebai, led him to seek revenge by spraying acid on Ms Bongka before killing himself¹⁸
- the death of Ms Roukaya Panguetna, a young policewoman aged 25, who was killed on 15 October 2024 in Batouri in the East Region as a result of blows inflicted on her by her partner, the gendarme named Zounkilifou Fonté at their home during a violent argument. The perpetrator was arrested by the forces of law and order¹⁹ and is being prosecuted before the Yaoundé Military Court hearing this case
- the murder of Ms Alida Mekalimedia following an arson attack by her ex-lover, Mr Joseph Ngounou, on the night of 8 to 9 June 2024 while she was at her friend Mouthe's house in Douala, Littoral Region. Ms Alida had left the house she shared with her partner because of the numerous physical assaults to which she was regularly subjected to, and had sought refuge with her friend Marianne, who lives with Mr Pierre Lewo, her husband, and their one-year-old child. Ms Mekalimedia and the child died on the spot as a result of the severe burns, and Mr Pierre Lewo, who was admitted to hospital with his companion Marianne, died shortly thereafter; A warrant was issued for the arsonist who is still being actively sought by the police
- the discovery on 7 April 2024 of the decapitated and dismembered body of Journalist Sylvie Louise Ngo Yebel, aged 47, married and mother of four children, hidden in a suitcase abandoned near a stream in the Elig-Edzoa quarter in Yaoundé, Centre Region. Investigations subsequently led to the arrest of the perpetrator, on 9 April 2024, who turned out to be Mr Landry Batek Yebel, her own son
- the attack on the life of a young woman, Pauline Eva Labaramo, on 27 March 2024, at her home in the Mimboman neighbourhood in Yaoundé, Centre Region, involving her ex-partner and his accomplices who struck her on the head with a pestle before suffocating her. The perpetrators of this heinous act were arrested on 13 April 2024 by the Regional Judicial Police Division of the Centre Region,

The Commission welcomes the commitment of public authorities to implement the recommendations made to them in its statement published to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women on 25 November 2023. In particular, the

¹⁸ Cf. *Cameroun Web*, « Féminicide au Cameroun : une universitaire succombe à une attaque à l'acide », <https://www.camerounweb.com/CameroonHomePage/NewsArchive/F-minicide-au-Cameroun-une-universitaire-succombe-une-attaque-l-acide-773355>, accessed on 3 November 2024.

¹⁹ Cf. *Cameroun Web*, « Couple toxique : des révélations sur la policière battue à mort par son compagne gendarme », <https://www.camerounweb.com/CameroonHomePage/NewsArchive/Couple-toxique-des-r-v-lations-sur-la-polici-re-battue-mort-par-son-compagne-gendarme-772617>, accessed on 3 November 2024.

Ministry of Justice, which by its letters No 000957/CD/05/007/SC184/PPE/DDHCI/MJ/SDCI/CEA/MY of 8 February 2024 and No. 005828/CD/05/007/SC184/PPE/DDHCI/MJ/SDCI/CEA/MY of 15 July 2024, reassured the CHRC, on the one hand, that measures are being taken by the ministry to follow up on the cases referred to in the aforementioned CHRC statement, and informed it, on the other hand, of the legal action in respect of the cases of violence against women mentioned in the same statement,

The Commission also welcomes the feedback from certain ministries to its previous statement marking the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women in 2023, in particular those from:

- MINPROFF, which, in its letter No 0000111/L/MINPROFF/SG/DPSF/SDPDF/SPDSF/OMT of 22 January 2024, commended the CHRC for its work to promote and protect the rights of women and assured the CHRC that its statement will be duly consulted for effective implementation within the scope of the Ministry,
- the Ministry of Social Affairs (MINAS), which by letter No 17/056/L/MINAS/SG/DPPHPA/PFG of 30 January 2024, expressed its encouragement to the CHRC for the particular interest it shows for the protection of the rights of women,

The Commission notes that out of the 220 recommendations accepted by the State during the adoption of Cameroon's Report after undergoing the fourth cycle of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) on 26 March 2024, five are in favour of the fight to eliminate violence against women. These recommendations have been transmitted by the CHRC to the relevant ministries and civil society organisations (CSOs), each, as far as it is concerned, as follows:

- The recommendation to *“combat sexual and gender-based violence, particularly in conflict zones, and [to] take concrete measures to prevent domestic violence”*, addressed to the General Secretariat of the Presidency of the Republic, the Office of the Prime Minister, the Head of Government, the Ministry of Defence (MINDEF), MINPROFF and MINAS
- The recommendation to *“double efforts to enforce laws on harmful practices such as early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation, to put an end to these practices, and [to] end these practices [while intensifying] awareness-raising campaigns in this regard”*, addressed to the Ministry of Territorial Administration (MINAT), MINAS, MINPROFF and CSOs
- The recommendation to *“continue implementing measures to empower women and combat discrimination and violence against them”* addressed to MINAS, MINPROFF and CSOs
- The recommendation to *“strengthen the role of women in society, particularly by providing information on female genital mutilation and other harmful practices, supporting girls' education and taking measures to integrate women into the*

workforce”, addressed to the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training (MINEFOP), the Ministry of Communication (MINCOM), the Ministry of Higher Education (MINESUP), the Ministry of Secondary Education (MINESEC), the Ministry of Basic Education (MINEDUB), the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Civic Education (MINJEC), MINAS, MINPROFF and CSOs

- The recommendation to “*combat all forms of sexual and gender-based violence, in particular marital rape, early marriage, forced marriage and female genital mutilation, and [to] strengthen the implementation of the legislation and policies relating to women and girls*” addressed to MINAS, MINPROFF, MINCOM and CSOs,

The Commission reiterates some of the recommendations it made at the last International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women in 2023, in particular that:

the Government complete the development process of the draft bill against GBV launched by MINPROFF and the draft bill on the Family Code.

the Ministry of Justice (particularly through the legal departments)

- systematically track down, apprehend and punish all perpetrators of violence against women and girls according to the existing laws, to deter others from committing acts of violence against women
- further strengthen the capacity of actors in the judicial chain on the African and universal normative framework for the protection of the rights of women.

The Commission recommends that:

- the government strengthen the criminal law framework relating to violence and discrimination against women by facilitating the adoption of provisions criminalising domestic violence in general and economic violence in particular, including control on finances, refusal of financial support, and prohibition from working
- *MINAS and MINPROFF* strengthen their awareness-raising policy on violence against women, particularly by translating national, African and universal instruments for the promotion and protection of the rights of women into local languages to make them more accessible to the population,

The Commission especially urges:

- *civil society actors* to be aware of their role in disseminating good practices that can help prevent or respond to violence against women, and
- *men* to integrate the virtues of positive masculinity into their daily lives and play their role in preventing and eradicating violence against women,

The Commission encourages families and communities to cooperate with these authorities so that the perpetrators of violence against women and girls are apprehended,

brought to justice and, where appropriate, sentenced according to the laws and regulations in force,

For its part, *the Commission will spare no effort* to continue raising awareness with a particular focus on violence against women and girls. This will be achieved through training workshops, awareness-raising campaigns, advocacy, visits to places of detention, fact-finding missions, the handling of complaints and self-initiated investigations,

The Commission therefore calls upon any person who is a victim or witness of Human rights violations, and especially violation of women's rights to contact the CHRC, including via its toll-free number: 1523 (free calls).

Useful addresses of CHRC

Web site: www.cdhc.cm

Facebook and X (former Twitter): *Cameroon Human Rights Commission*

WhatsApp: 691 99 56 90

Yaoundé, 25 November 2024

