

KLW BRIEFING

Updates for the Coalition for Dialogue and Negotiations

The Southern Cameroons Incident Tracker: <https://reportscatrocities.info>

Japan Offers FCFA 1.5 Billion for Reconstruction of Anglophone Regions

By Journal du Cameroun | February 19, 2021

The government of Japan has offered its support to the recovery plan of the North West and South West Regions of Cameroon by offering USD 2,750,998. "We are working step by step, of course it is not an easy situation but the priority for us is to support the affected population of the North West and South West Regions. We think that it is very important, while other things are taking place (like) dialogue and other things, that we don't forget to at the same time to provide social, economic and basic services to the affected population," the Resident Representative of the UNDP, Jean Luc Stalon said. According to the UNDP, the signing is an opportunity to celebrate the multilateral cooperation between Japan, Cameroon and the United Nations. Japan thus becomes the of Cameroon to respond favorably to the appeal that was launched by Cameroon to support the recovery efforts following the Major National Dialogue to resolve the crisis in the North West and South West Regions of Cameroon.

Cameroon's Bloody Conflict: Victims' Agony as COVID-19 Disrupts Government Humanitarian Assistance Plan

By Ayang Macdonald | February 18, 2021

Sixty-five-year-old Daniel Akwo was among more than 2,000 people who lined up at a ceremonial ground in Mamfe, in the South West region of Cameroon, on January 6, 2021, in desperate wait to receive just a handful of humanitarian assistance items from the government of the central African nation. Cameroon's government has, since 2018, been running an emergency humanitarian assistance plan, which has had support from various bilateral partners such as China. But the outbreak of the coronavirus last March dealt a severe blow to it, leaving thousands of victims of a bloody conflict in the country's English speaking regions in acute desperation. The massive Mamfe crowd was not in any way reflective of the quality of the items being distributed, but rather of the frustration of the thousands of victims of a bloody armed conflict which has claimed more than 4,000 lives and displaced millions. According to figures from the United Nations, about three million people in the English-speaking regions have been affected by the humanitarian crisis. After the long wait under the scorching sun of Mamfe – a town about 450 kilometers from the political capital, Yaounde – all Daniel Akwo is able to take home are a thin mattress, a blanket, a small bucket of rice, three liters of vegetable oil, and about ten tablets of washing soap. Akwo is visibly excited to take home the pack, but the food items are far less sufficient to serve, for up to two weeks, the over ten IDPs the subsistence farmer is hosting in his small house in Mamfe. He is, however, excited because it is the first time in nearly a year that government or any other charity organization was reaching out

Fako Traditional Rulers Call for More Security Measures

By Doina Ngaha | February 19, 2021

Cameroon has detained eight soldiers after a video emerged over the weekend showing them in uniform torturing a victim with a machete until he fell unconscious, the Central African nation's defense ministry said on Monday. The incident, which occurred on Feb. 11 in the North West Region, one of the country's English-speaking regions where separatist insurgents have been battling government forces since 2017, is the latest in a series of atrocities and suspected rights abuse in the drawn-out conflict. The ministry said the man in the video was suspected of helping separatist fighters. Reuters has not verified the video. The video widely shared and decried on social media shows a shirtless man lying on the floor. A soldier steps on his back to keep him steady, then flogs him with the flat side of a machete, while another soldier wets the man's buttocks. Another video sequence shows a soldier standing on the victim's ankles as he lies on the ground. The soldier then uses the flat end of the machete to beat the soles of the victim's feet as he screams, while another soldier slaps him. The video later shows the unresponsive man lying face down, head in a gutter. A soldier prods him with the muzzle of his rifle, while another soldier says off camera that they should hold off because they do not know if the victim is a separatist fighter.

to IDPs in the small town with humanitarian supplies. Mr Akwo is just one of several other persons who recounted to me the ordeal they have gone through since the outbreak of the global pandemic in Cameroon, with deaths registered in some instances as a result of the disruption brought about by the virus. Daniel Akwo tells me he is hosting eight IDP women, some of them with young children. The IDPs come from villages in Akwaya sub-division, fleeing years of insecurity inflicted on them by both government troops and armed militia men. Being a subsistence farmer, Mr Akwo hardly has enough food for his IDP guests, but because they must eat, he has to make ends meet. He said apart from his individual efforts to take care of them, he has over the years also relied on some of the assistance brought around by government as well as private humanitarian outfits. Like some other countries that entertain cordial bilateral relations with Cameroon, The People's Republic of China has been very helpful in the implementation of Cameroon's emergency humanitarian assistance plan which was drawn up to the tune of XAF 12 billion (about \$20 million) and launched in June 2018. The plan is coordinated by Cameroon's Minister of Territorial Administration (Minister of Interior). Over the years, China has not only assisted Cameroon in building and equipping its health system, it has played a pivotal role in the donation of both financial and material resources for the humanitarian cause in the country's Anglophone regions. Some of the donations have included food items, bedding, drugs, other personal effects and even vehicles to enable government officials to access areas where the humanitarian assistance is needed. The outbreak of COVID-19 in Cameroon just came to add to the litany of difficulties that had been plaguing humanitarian efforts in the country. Even before the pandemic, access to remote areas in the North West and South West Regions had been literally blocked as humanitarian agencies found it difficult taking aid to those areas due to the severity of the violence. "During this period (of the pandemic), we didn't have stocks of humanitarian protection material to send to the field for our staff who were working on the frontlines. That was a big issue and a big concern. Another issue was that the supply chain of our materials into the country was heavily impacted. It was difficult for us to have planes that could come in, and the few ones we found were extremely expensive. The third big problem had to do with our human resources. It was really difficult getting people on the field given that there were a lot of travel restrictions including border closures which made it difficult for some of our international staff to come in," Gisa Kouler, head of mission for Doctors Without Borders (DWB), said in an interview at the DWB head office in Buea, South West Cameroon. In Cameroon's Separatist War, Children are the Biggest Losers

[More Than 40 Members of Congress Ask Biden to Halt Deportation of Cameroonians to Unsafe Homeland](#)

By Julia Ainsley | February 17, 2021

More than 40 Democratic members of Congress wrote a letter to President Joe Biden and Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas on Wednesday asking them to grant temporary protected status to Cameroonians living in the U.S. by placing an 18-month pause on their deportations, according to a copy of the letter obtained by NBC News. The members of Congress were led by Sen. Chris Van Hollen of Maryland, who has repeatedly called on both the Trump and now Biden administrations to halt deportations of Cameroonians who are seeking asylum from the humanitarian crisis in their country. "The Trump administration has shamefully mistreated and deported Cameroonian asylum seekers back to danger just this year. We urge you to do much better," the 14 senators and 28 House members said in their letter. The letter asks that the Biden administration either grant temporary protected status or what is known as deferred enforcement departure, a power given to the president that would allow Cameroonians to be protected from deportation without having to register for a special program.

[Opinion: Why Black Issues Abroad Should Matter in the U.S.](#)

By Erin Threlkeld | February 17, 2021

In 2013, shortly after the emergence of the Black Lives Matter movement and the killing of Trayvon Martin, I developed a sense of urgency for justice in the countless number of police brutality cases and deaths of unarmed Black people at the hands of police officers. For centuries, African Americans have not had a strong understanding of or connection to their ancestral identities due to forced cultural erasure. After I witnessed and participated in community activism through marches and die-ins demanding justice in the wrongful killing of Black people in the U.S., I sought to find out more about my roots through a DNA test from Ancestry.com. My Ancestry.com results found a high percentage of my DNA tracing back to Cameroon. While this discovery led me to ties with Cameroonian people already within my community, it also helped me to connect Black issues faced in the U.S. to those faced in Cameroon. Learning about my family's Cameroonian heritage provided a larger context for me to think about the trauma of slavery my ancestors experienced. My family history means more than the surnames owners of enslaved people gave my ancestors; it means we have a history that goes beyond slavery, which gives us autonomy. During my research, I came across the present Cameroonian Civil War, also known as the Anglophone Crisis, which began in September 2017 over the oppression of English-speaking Cameroonians who generally lack government representation from high-ranking officials who also speak English, and French Cameroonian laws that were being forced on them. I was shocked that there was a lack of kinship between Cameroonian tribes due to a difference in language, mostly because Black people globally are connected through a diaspora. While Black activists protest the murders of their community members, English-speaking Cameroonians fought for their civil rights due to the lack of legal representation and a government that does not reflect their values. This fight for equality created division in Cameroon because there is a strong sense of tribalism between different regions, with around 80% of the country able to speak French and the rest of the population only fluent in English or other languages. It is different when language as a barrier is a byproduct of colonization, compared to having a shared heritage of enslaved ancestors brought to an English-speaking country. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. once said: "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly." This quote is a relevant mantra Black people should consider when

hearing about the international oppression other Black people face. Black Americans should advocate for peace between both sides of Cameroon because we should be unified instead of killing each other. The French and the English sides should work together to have joint representation and an inclusive government because they are part of the same nation. And although we are separated by oceans, Black people are able to reach out internationally to help others. For example, Ronald Dellums, former congressman from California, worked to expose the inhumanity and injustice of apartheid, a system of longterm segregation, in South Africa, according to a VOA News article. Dellums' efforts led to protests held by other African Americans to advocate for an end to segregation. Incidents like this of successful international cooperation to end segregation in Africa are proof that Black alliances against oppression can be victorious. Despite geographical separation, Black people are globally taking up the Black Lives Matter movement, and we should continue to do so today by supporting those on different continents. It may seem that culture and language divide Black people from each other, but our shared heritage is what truly connects us.

radio to communicate messages of unity and reconciliation in its western regions, where separatists have been fighting to create an English-speaking state out of the French-speaking majority country. Theodore Kiniben Dufe is a former fighter. He says while in the bush, he could only get information from a solar-powered radio. Dufe says he escaped from a separatist camp in the English-speaking northwestern village of Mbuluf when he heard from the radio that surrendering fighters would not be arrested by the military. Cameroon says it is difficult to give statistics on how many fighters have surrendered because they listened to radio pleas for them to drop their weapons. Journalism associations, however, say radio's impact on peoples' lives is huge. People listen to the radio in their cars, shops, homes, offices and farms. Radios are cheaper than TVs, and newspapers are either not always available in the hinterlands or are out of reach for many. Cameroon has more than 200 radio stations. The central African state accuses some of the stations of propagating separatist ideology. The separatists accuse some journalists of broadcasting only information favorable to the government. Peter Essoka, president of Cameroon National Communication Council, says radio is essential for those who want to communicate in Cameroon. Essoka says journalists should work harder in verifying the information they broadcast, to continue to gain their audience's confidence.