

# KLW BRIEFING

## Updates for the Coalition for Dialogue and Negotiations

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

### Police Officer Killed by Suspected Ambazonia Fighters in Restive NW Region

By Journal du Cameroun | April 5, 2021

A police officer was killed on Sunday, April 4, 2021 in the restive North West Region by armed men suspected to belong to the Ambazonia armed separatist group. Police Officer, Galand Omba Ndzana who was working at the Public Security in Bali was ambushed and killed along the Bamenda-Bali road on Sunday night. Reports say he was pulled out of his vehicle and gunned down by the armed men who seized his weapon before setting his car ablaze. This is the latest case of violence in the restive Anglophone region after three persons were equally killed in Mbengwi following clashes between soldiers and separatist fighters.



### UNESCO Supports 5 Youth-Led Early Warning and Response Mechanisms for Peace-building Within 5 Councils in Cameroon

By India Education Diary | April 10, 2021

Young persons are usually the primary victims of violent extremism and conflict. When violence sets in, young girls and boys begin to live in fear, their dreams fall apart – they cannot have a decent education, turnover in their businesses fall, job opportunities diminish, food prices increase, the cost of transport skyrocket, etc. Rather than living positive lives and fulfilling their dreams, they are unfortunately compelled to join fighting factions and terrorist groups. As part of efforts contributing to the prevention of violent extremism, five exemplary young leaders of youth-led organizations have stepped up to the challenge by implementing Early Warning, and Early Response (EWER) mechanisms to conflict within five councils in Cameroon – Buea City Council, Douala IV Council, Babadjou Council, Kye-Ossi Council, and Maroua I Council. These young leaders include- Christian Achaleke of Local Youth Corner (LOYOC), Loic Atangana Nkulu of the Pan-African Network for a Culture of Peace (PAYNCOP), Brice Nisebang of the Cameroon National Youth Council (NYC), Paul Bernard Noah of “G-54 Afrique Avenir” and Gladys Tchegoue of Dynamique Mondiale des Jeunes (DMJ). Other youth leaders equally participated in this initiative such as Desmond Ngala of Rog Agency for Open



## Cameroon's Disarmament Official Kidnapped in Restive Anglophone Region

By CGTN Africa | April 8, 2021

Gunmen abducted an official of Cameroon's National Committee on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (NCDDR) in the country's troubled Anglophone region of Northwest on Wednesday, according to local officials and security sources. Henry Kum, Service Head of NCDDR Northwest was kidnapped at his residence Wednesday afternoon in Bamenda, a town of the region, said officials. Kum was a main actor in helping to disarm and reintegrate armed separatist fighters in the region since government forces and the fighters started clashing in 2017. The NCDDR was created in 2018 "to avoid the use of extreme measures" and supervise and manage the disarmament and reintegration of ex-combatants of terror group Boko Haram and armed separatists in the Anglophone regions. Cameroon has been plagued by protests and violence since 2016 as residents in the English-speaking regions claim they have been marginalized for several years by the central government and the French-speaking majority. The two English-speaking regions, South West and North West provinces, became the epicentre of the conflict involving separatist militants who have targeted the army and demanded the closure of local government offices and schools. The conflict has claimed more than 3,000 lives and forced over 700,000 people to flee their homes since 2017.



Culture, Stephane Mebonde of Accord Parfait and Ramatu Abdou of the Association for the Welfare of Women and Indigenous Persons (ASOWWIP). Youth-led early warning and response mechanisms consist of building dialogue and trust between youth and local administrative, traditional, and religious authorities as well as forces of law and order and women community leaders as a means of preventing conflicts from triggering or escalating. UNESCO, through the Peacebuilding Fund, is providing technical guidance and financial support to these young leaders as well as facilitating their interaction and credibility vis-à-vis the competent authorities. Feedback from authorities has been high. For instance, Mrs. Akawoh Minerva epse Molinge, 1st deputy Mayor of Buea council welcomed this initiative and commended the youth leaders for proactively tackling the issue of violence in the community. Mr. HAPPI DE NGUIAMBA Joseph Victorien, Divisional Officer of Kye-Ossi underscored the pertinence of the initiative for Kye-Ossi, which as a border town hosts diverse populations from Cameroon, Gabon, and Equatorial Guinea. Ensuring peaceful co-existence of peoples is a daily effort for its authorities he stressed. Adama Ilyassa, an Imam in Maroua, and Samadel Kaskam, an evangelical pastor in the same city gracefully integrated the Task Force of the early warning and response mechanism and are committed to building trust and peaceful co-existence between natives and internally displaced persons in Maroua. Maroua is home to several persons fleeing the devastating effect of terrorism perpetrated by Boko Haram in the Far North Region and in such conditions, the social integration of IDPs in the community is not always a smooth process. Youth-led early warning mechanisms transform perceptions on young persons. They portray youths as responsible, solution providers, concerned, and proactive about preventing violence in their communities, stakeholders to engage for durable peace to be achieved. Early warning mechanisms are an organized framework for community dialogue and peaceful living together led by young persons. UNESCO in collaboration with authorities and other partners will continue to support these mechanisms and scale them countrywide, beyond the 5 pilot councils for the preservation of peaceful coexistence in Cameroon.

## Africa's Neglected Conflict and the Price Paid by Civilians

By Zoe Wollenschlaeger | April 7, 2021

On the coast of the Gulf of Guinea lies Cameroon, a country in Central Africa known for its geographical, cultural, and linguistic diversity. Although the official languages of Cameroon

## UN Chief: 52 Armies and Groups Suspected of Sexual Violence

By Edith M. Lederer | April 13, 2021

The COVID-19 pandemic led to a spike in gender-based violence last year and combatants continued to use sexual violence "as a cruel tactic of war" and political repression in a number of countries, the U.N. chief said in a report circulated Monday. The report focused on 18 countries where the U.N. said it has obtained verified information. It lists 52 parties "credibly suspected" of responsibility "for patterns of rape or other forms of sexual violence" in conflicts on the agenda of the U.N. Security Council. Over 70% of the listed parties "are persistent perpetrators," it said. The majority of those on the U.N. blacklist are "non-state actors" — opposition, rebel or terrorist groups linked to Islamic State or al-Qaida extremist groups. National military or police forces on the list, including Myanmar's military and border guard, are barred from participating in U.N. peace operations until they adopt time-bound commitments to cease violations. The "blacklist" also includes government and police forces in Congo and South Sudan; government forces and intelligence services in Syria; armed forces and rapid support forces in Sudan; and army and police in Somali and forces in its Puntland region. ... In the West African nation of Cameroon, Guterres said reports indicate 24 women were allegedly raped during a military operation involving separatists in February 2020, an incident which wasn't disclosed until July. ... The secretary-general urged the U.N. Security Council to demand an immediate end to sexual violence by all parties to armed conflict, to maintain that perpetrators of sexual violence can face sanctions, and to refer situations where crimes of sexual violence appear to have been committed to the International Criminal Court. Guterres encouraged U.N. member states, donors, regional and intergovernmental organizations to ensure that victims of sexual violence are recognized, assisted and receive reparations.

are French and English – over 600 indigenous languages are spoken throughout the country according to CETRA Language Solutions. However, Cameroon's linguistic variety does not come without its consequences. The Anglophone Crisis began in 2016, when English-speaking lawyers and teachers protesting against discrimination by the Francophone government were met with lethal force by military officials. In response, a movement to secede from Cameroon began in the Anglophone region. The separatists consider themselves "freedom fighters" whilst the Cameroonian government labels them as "terrorists." The United Nations estimates that the Anglophone Conflict impacted over three million people, displaced over 700,000, and killed over 4,000. Before 2021, the Anglophone Conflict was primarily defined by attacks between separatists groups and government forces. However, according to the United Nations and the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data (ACLED) Project, separatist groups are increasingly targeting innocent civilians. Since 2021, separatists have been accused of abducting dozens of civilians, murdering village leaders, and even carrying out IED attacks. Since the end of school closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic, separatist forces have targeted schools for violent attacks due to the dominance of the French language in the Cameroonian education system. Between October and December of 2020, "...the United Nations recorded 35 attacks on schools including the killing, torture and abduction of students and teachers, as well as arson of education facilities," according to a report published by Al Jazeera. However, separatists groups are not the only accused. In the same time frame, military forces have been accused of burning homes, unjustly arresting individuals, and killing countless individuals. According to Human Rights Watch, government forces even attacked, looted, and destroyed the Royal Palace in Bafut – a UNESCO World Heritage Site. In addition, military forces used inhumane methods of detention and torture against suspected separatist rebels. Such methods included severe beatings, humiliation, and even near-drowning. Despite the vast amount of human rights abuses, destruction of both private and public property, abductions, and murder of countless civilians – the conflict in Cameroon lacks sufficient humanitarian funding. According to Al Jazeera, a 2019 UN Appeal gathered only 43% of requested humanitarian funding. Evidently, the conflict in Cameroon is overlooked by the international community at the cost of the homes, businesses, and lives of innocent Cameroonian civilians. Until the international community pays adequate attention and contributes necessary funding to Cameroon, Africa's neglected conflict will continue to worsen whilst civilians bear the brunt of the damage.

## **Sub-Saharan Africa: The Devastating Impact of Conflicts Compounded by COVID-19**

By Amnesty International | April 7, 2021

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the terrible legacy of deliberately divisive and destructive policies that have perpetuated inequality, discrimination, and oppression across Sub-Saharan Africa, Amnesty International said in its annual report published today. Across the region, the devastating impact of armed conflict in countries such as Ethiopia, Mozambique, Cameroon, and Nigeria, was compounded by the pandemic as a number of states weaponized it to crack down on human rights. The crackdowns included killings of civilians and arrests of opposition politicians and supporters and human rights defenders and activists in countries such as Angola, Guinea, and Uganda. ... “Conflicts between states and armed groups and attacks on civilians have continued or escalated in most parts of Sub-Saharan Africa. In Southern Africa, the long simmering violent tensions in Mozambique’s Cabo Delgado province intensified into full-blown armed conflict. The Horn of Africa region saw an outbreak of conflict in Ethiopia’s Tigray region,” said Deprese Muchena, Amnesty International Director for East and Southern Africa. “At the same time, armed groups maintained a foothold in West Africa and the Sahel region, attacking civilians in Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, and Nigeria. They blighted many lives in Cameroon, the Central African Republic (CAR) and Chad. In response, state security forces also committed grave human rights violations against civilians.” ... Some leaders have gone a step further, using the distraction of the pandemic to clamp down on criticism – and critics – unrelated to the virus, and perpetrate other human rights violations. For example, in Tanzania, authorities further cracked down on civil society activists, including through restricting human rights such as freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly ahead of the October election. ... Dozens of people were arbitrarily arrested in August in Côte d’Ivoire for having participated in demonstrations against President Ouattara’s running for a third term. A nationwide ban on demonstrations was issued in Cameroon after the opposition Cameroon Renaissance Movement (MRC) called for the resignation of the president and hundreds of demonstrators were arbitrarily arrested.