



Thirty-Ninth Ordinary Session

11 - 25 May 2005, Banjul, The Gambia

**Consideration of Reports Submitted by States Parties under Article 62 of the
African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights**

**Concluding Observations and Recommendations on the Periodic Report of the
Republic Cameroon**

I. Introduction

1. The following Concluding Observations follow the presentation of the Periodic Report of the Republic of Cameroon (Cameroon), State Party to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (African Charter) having ratified the same on 20 June 1989.
2. The Report was examined during the 39th Ordinary Session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (the African Commission), held in Banjul, The Gambia, from 11 to 25 May, 2005.
3. The Report covers the period from December 2001 to December 2003 and was submitted to the Secretariat of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights on 24 November 2005.
4. The Report outlines, in accordance with Article 62 of the African Charter, legislative and other steps taken to give effect to the rights and liberties enshrined in the African Charter especially, the implementation of the recommendations of the African Commission after the submission of the Initial and combined Reports presented during the 31st Ordinary Session held in May 2002 in Pretoria, South Africa.

5. The Report was presented to the African Commission by a Delegation led by His Excellency, Dr. Dion Ngute, Minister Delegate at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Charge of the Commonwealth.
6. The present Concluding Observations highlight the positive aspects identified in the report and factors restricting the enjoyment of human and peoples' rights as enshrined in the African Charter.
7. The Concluding Observations also deal with the areas of concern and the recommendations of the African Commission.
8. The African Commission notes with satisfaction that the presentation of the report of Cameroon took place in public session, and that the discussions between the Delegation of Cameroon and the African Commission were frank and constructive.
9. The African Commission thanks H.E Dr Dion Ngute and his Delegation for the detailed responses and clarifications given to the African Commission at its request.

II. The Positive Aspects

The African Commission:

10. Congratulates Cameroon for the timely presentation of its Periodic Reports, in accordance with Article 62 of The African Charter and both the format and presentation of the Report are in line with the African Commission's Guidelines on the Preparation of Periodic Reports.
11. Applauds the efforts exerted by Cameroon to guarantee to the people of Cameroon the enjoyment of the rights and liberties enshrined in the African Charter, namely:
 - a. Ratification of International and regional Instruments on Human Rights;
 - b. Including training on human rights in the curriculum of magistrates;

- c. The efforts made by the Government of Cameroon to place the Administration of Prisons under the Ministry of Justice in a bid to secure better conditions of detention;
- d. The enhancement of the policy on free, compulsory and basic education for all;
- f. The pursuance and promotion of the culture of respect for human rights in order to reduce the tensions which exist between Anglophones and Francophones within the society and to promote the peaceful co-existence of the various ethnic groups;
- g. The efforts deployed by the Cameroon Government to guarantee better access to health care for the populations, notably with regard to endemic diseases and HIV/AIDS; and
- h. The considerable efforts deployed by the Government to ensure the provision of care and access to health care by physically disabled and elderly persons.

III. Factors Restricting the Enjoyment of the Rights Enshrined in the African Charter

- 11. The poverty and the impoverishment of the population constitute a constraint against the implementation of the rights and liberties protected and guaranteed by the African Charter.
- 12. The phenomenon of corruption which prevails in the country is also a factor which affects the chain of equality between people.

IV. Areas of concern

While recognising the efforts of Cameroon to promote and protect human rights and to promote awareness of the principles and provisions of the African Charter, the African Commission remains concerned that:

- 13. The situation of vulnerable groups in general and in particular that of street children and of indigenous populations/communities and human rights defenders remain precarious;
- 14. There is an upsurge of intolerance against sexual minorities;

15. The Report does not specify the measures taken to guarantee the independence of the Judiciary and legal assistance to indigents.
16. The Report does not elaborate on the measures adopted to give effect to gender, notably the participation of women in political and economic activities;

V. Recommendations

The African Commission recommends to the Government of Cameroon to:

17. Pursue the institutional reforms aimed at establishing or reinforcing all the Republican institutions;
18. Pursue the policies of prison reforms in order to guarantee better conditions of detention;
19. Take measures to protect and integrate the pygmies and Mbororo who constitute minority groups so that these groups can enjoy the rights prescribed in the African Charter;
20. Take adequate anti-corruption measures to eradicate this phenomenon;
21. Take measures to facilitate the economic integration of women;
22. To ensure that the National Human Rights Commission works in close collaboration with NGOs so that the rights enunciated in the African Charter constitute a reality for all the citizens;
23. Inform the African Commission, in its next Periodic Report, of the steps it has taken to address the areas of concern, as well as how it has implemented the recommendations in this Concluding Observations.

Adopted at the 39th Ordinary Session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights held from 11 to 25 May 2005, Banjul, The Gambia