



**Convention against Torture  
and Other Cruel, Inhuman  
or Degrading Treatment  
or Punishment**

Distr.: General  
1 October 2020  
English  
Original: French  
English and French only

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**Committee against Torture**

**Information received from Cameroon on follow-  
up to the concluding observations on its fifth  
periodic report\***

[Date received: 14 July 2020]

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\* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



## **Follow-up report on certain recommendations made to Cameroon by the Committee against Torture**

1. After the Committee's consideration of the fifth periodic report of Cameroon on 8 and 9 November 2017, the Committee and Cameroon engaged in a constructive dialogue that led to the adoption of the concluding observations. The present report describes the steps that have been taken to respond to certain areas of concern regarding which the Committee wished to receive follow-up information before Cameroon submitted its sixth periodic report, which is due no later than 6 December 2021.
2. The present follow-up report was prepared with the participation of public and private actors as well as partners and covers the period from December 2017 to December 2018, with some updated data provided. The report was approved during a workshop, held in Yaoundé on 19 and 20 February 2019, on making the Committee's concluding observations understandable to the public.
3. The concerns expressed and discussed in the concluding observations are closely tied to the security situation in Cameroon. In particular, they relate to the struggle against the terrorist group Boko Haram in the Far North Region (para. 12 of the concluding observations), the humanitarian crisis stemming from the flows of refugees and internally displaced persons into that Region (para. 18), the sociopolitical crisis in the North-West and South-West Regions (para. 20) and the deposit of the instruments of ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention (para. 40).

### **Recommendation made in paragraph 12 of the concluding observations**

#### **Additional information on paragraphs 11 and 12 (a) of the concluding observations (CAT/C/CMR/CO/5)**

4. In line with the country's international commitments, ministerial instructions have again been given to defence and security forces on the absolute ban on torture. In repeating these instructions, the Minister of Defence, in circular No. 190256/DV/MINDEF/01 of 18 January 2019, which was addressed to all the defence and security services for which he is responsible, re-emphasized the ban in the following terms: "Torture is officially banned in Cameroon, as stated in the Criminal Code ... Therefore, whosoever commits acts of torture, orders that they be committed, is an accomplice to their commission or tacitly allows them to be committed shall be held personally accountable before the law". This reminder was followed by instructions to:
  - Launch investigations and commence prosecutions against those, including persons in positions of authority, who carry out acts of torture or ill-treatment or arbitrary detention or are responsible for deaths in custody
  - Stop the practices of arbitrary and extrajudicial detention
  - Create a central register of arrested and detained persons that can be consulted by families
  - Allow monitored access by human rights observers to all places of deprivation of liberty
5. In that circular, the Minister of Defence also specifically instructed military commanders in the Far North, North-West and South-West Regions to provide regular in-service training in the use of force, particularly during demonstrations, for all personnel under their authority, in line with the relevant United Nations principles.
6. With respect to the Far North Region, the Minister directed military commanders to:
  - Refrain from any forcible expulsions of Nigerian refugees, in accordance with the principle of non-refoulement
  - Ensure that effective investigations are conducted and that access to recourse is available when reports or complaints are made regarding cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or extortion of property by military personnel

7. Military commanders in the North-West and South-West Regions have been instructed to ensure that military personnel alleged to have used excessive force or engaged in extrajudicial executions, ill-treatment or arbitrary arrests are effectively prosecuted and punished and to provide their superiors with periodic reports on all relevant cases.

8. Furthermore, by note No. 00000153/MRP/GN/244 of 23 January 2019, the Secretary of State to the Minister of Defence in charge of the National Gendarmerie conveyed instructions to the Gendarmerie that were similar to those set out in the circular issued by the Minister of Defence.

#### **Additional information on paragraph 12 (b) of the concluding observations**

9. During the period under review, the State has reiterated its commitment to combating the impunity of law enforcement officers found to have engaged in wrongdoing. Cases of wrongdoing including torture, ill-treatment and incommunicado detention resulting in deaths in custody have been investigated and, where proved, disciplinary and judicial penalties have been imposed.

10. The Minister of Defence has once again instructed military commanders to ensure that all allegations of torture and ill-treatment, extrajudicial execution, arbitrary detention or deaths in custody made against members of the military are promptly, effectively and impartially investigated, as mentioned above. Previous instructions of this kind produced results, as the following cases illustrate.

11. Navy lieutenant F.E. and six other members of the military were investigated for their suspected involvement in the premeditated killing of four persons – namely, a woman by the name of Zoumtigui Danakoua, the child Lada Badina, another woman and an unidentified child in Krawa Mafa (Zeveled) in Mayo-Moskota, a district in the Far North Region, in April 2015. The investigation led to the opening of a judicial inquiry at Yaoundé Military Court against the individuals mentioned above and their placement in pretrial detention. The case is in progress. In 2018, the National Gendarmerie launched nine investigations into human rights violations by gendarmes. At year's end, one decision had been handed down, five cases were being tried and three were at the stage of judicial inquiry. In most of these cases, the individuals charged or under inquiry are being held in pretrial detention.

12. In 2017, disciplinary penalties were imposed on 13 police officers with ranks ranging from captain to constable who had engaged in wrongdoing. The misconduct that they were accused of included false arrest and imprisonment and assault and battery. The penalties included two suspensions, six reprimands with an entry in the officer's record, three delays or cancellations of future promotions, three demotions and one dismissal. One captain, seven senior police officers, five police inspectors and one constable were given disciplinary penalties in 2017; 18 other members of the police force are awaiting the outcome of other disciplinary proceedings.

13. A number of Prison Service personnel were also punished in 2017 for their inhuman treatment of prisoners. The misconduct involved 84 members of the Service, including a deputy warden, and the penalties they were given generally consisted of suspensions and reprimands with an entry in the staff member's record.

14. Finally, 75 members of the defence and security forces were given disciplinary penalties for false arrest, torture and assault.

15. Seventy-five members of the defence forces were brought before the courts in 2017 for various offences (false arrest and imprisonment, torture, assault and battery), and five were given prison terms and fines. In judgment No. 060/17 of 30 November 2017, for example, Bertoua Military Court found a private first class, Z.E., guilty of insubordination and torture, allowed mitigating circumstances and sentenced him to serve 7 months in prison and pay a fine of 50,000 CFA francs (CFAF).

16. Regarding the police, there is the case of one Ibrahim Bello, who was arrested and taken into custody for attempted theft on 5 February 2017 in the town of Ombessa in the Centre Region. The initial conclusions of the investigation of the police officers involved showed that the station chief who had decided to place Ibrahim Bello in custody, despite the signs on his hands and legs of the assault he had suffered at the hands of the townspeople,

had been professionally negligent. Administratively, a senior police officer and a police inspector were suspended, and disciplinary proceedings were subsequently brought against them for engaging in wrongdoing undermining the reputation of the police and assaulting an individual in police custody. In the courts, there was an inquiry into the actions of the senior police officer and police inspector suspected of having beaten the victim, and the police inspector was placed in pretrial detention on 16 May 2017. The inquiry was closed on 18 September 2018, and the two individuals were charged as accessories to torture and serious assault and ordered to appear before the *tribunal de grande instance* (court of major jurisdiction) of Mbam and Inoubou. The trial had begun but had been adjourned until 6 March 2019.

17. Under article 75 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, victims may seek effective redress by filing a civil claim for damages as part of criminal proceedings. Thus, in the case *M.P. and heirs of Ade Tateh v. K.M.B. et al.*, the Mfoundi *Tribunal de Grande Instance* found the accused guilty of torture, arrest and false imprisonment, sentenced him to 6 years' imprisonment, fined him CFAF 200,000 and ordered him to pay the victim CFAF 7.3 million in damages.

18. A review of the cases of deaths in custody reported from December 2017 to December 2018 reveals, after investigation, that most of the deaths were the result of illness. In 2018, there were 86 deaths in prisons due to a variety of health conditions, including heart and lung ailments, immunodepression, gastroenteritis and tuberculosis.

19. Investigations have been launched when there have been suspicious deaths, such as in the cases of Nseka Abassy, who was being held for drug trafficking by the gendarmerie of Buea and died on 18 July 2018, and Laurent Tientcheu, who died on 8 August 2018 at Kumba Main Prison, where he was being held for murder.

20. Furthermore, an investigation was launched and the commander of the gendarmerie of Mbanga was relieved of his command after Ludovic Tchüidjan died in police custody on 13 June 2018.

#### **Additional information on paragraph 12 (c) of the concluding observations**

21. The State has taken note of this recommendation, which has informed the above-mentioned circular from the Minister of Defence.

22. In this regard, the State reiterates that, against the backdrop of its struggle against the terrorist group Boko Haram, persons arrested during or after military operations are made available to the judicial authorities for investigation and prosecution before the competent courts.

23. Persons placed in detention in connection with these prosecutions are held at Maroua Central Prison, Yaoundé Secondary Prison and Garoua Central Prison. These three prisons were among the 78 prisons operational in Cameroon between December 2017 and December 2018.

24. Incidentally, allegations of incommunicado detention sometimes involve individuals who have been arrested and transferred from the regions to Yaoundé Military Court, which, under article 4 of Act No. 2017/012 of 12 July 2017, the Code of Military Justice, has nationwide jurisdiction to try certain offences. Relatives, without bothering to seek information from the competent authorities, prefer to conclude that the individuals are being held incommunicado.

25. Furthermore, Cameroon has designated the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms as the national preventive mechanism for the prevention of torture in places of deprivation of liberty, and legislative amendments are being made to enable the Commission to carry out this new mission. The national preventive mechanism will have the freedom to access all places of deprivation of liberty as defined under the Optional Protocol to the Convention.

**Additional information on paragraph 12 (d) of the concluding observations**

26. As noted in the country's periodic report, registers with information about detainees, including their identity, the date of their incarceration, the reasons for their incarceration and, especially, the name of the penitentiary where they are being held, must be kept in the Cameroonian prison system.

27. As a result, information about individuals detained in connection with counter-terrorism efforts has, in each penitentiary, been regularly entered in the register.

28. Police and gendarmerie units keep a police custody log that informs the public of the condition of the individuals in custody. In addition to the log, there is a bulletin board where the names of those individuals are placed.

**Additional information on paragraph 12 (e) of the concluding observations**

29. Human rights observers are generally guaranteed access to places of detention in accordance with the laws in force. The National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms, the International Committee of the Red Cross and non-governmental organizations active in the defence of human rights have therefore been authorized to visit places of detention, including prison cells and cells used by the police and gendarmerie.

30. From January to August 2017, the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms visited 48 places of detention, including 19 prisons,<sup>1</sup> throughout the country. In addition, between 5 and 7 September 2017, the Commission visited places of detention in Bertoua, Doumé and Abong Mbang in the East Region. From January to October 2018, the Commission visited 19 prisons and 75 custody cells. The Commission finds it regrettable that the limited financial resources and social tensions in some regions have prevented it from visiting certain prisons.

31. The authorities have closely examined the concerns raised by the Commission as part of a dialogue with that institution, which has thus been granted access, under the conditions provided for by law, to the places of detention in question. Furthermore, the Commission's mandate as the national preventive mechanism will give it greater room for manoeuvre in this regard.

32. The International Committee of the Red Cross and civil society organizations have also been granted access to places of detention. Between October 2017 and April 2018, the Red Cross visited 17 places of detention. These visits were carried out in connection with a medical and nutritional assistance programme implemented in four prisons located in Maroua, Bertoua, Garoua and Kousséri.

**Additional information on paragraphs 17 and 18 (a) of the concluding observations**

33. Because of the sociopolitical crises in neighbouring countries and the violence perpetrated by the terrorist group Boko Haram, Cameroon has received and continues to receive increasingly large flows of refugees and internally displaced persons in the East, Adamaoua, North and Far North Regions.

34. The refugee population, including 88,706 Nigerians, was estimated to be around 375,000 in late 2016, an increase from around 340,000 in 2015. The Minawao camp alone was home to some 60,000 Nigerian refugees, with the rest living in local communities. There were 337,398 refugees in December 2017 – of the 85,140 from Nigeria, more than 60,000 were living in Minawao.

35. The country's reception of such a large number of refugees in both camps and local communities demonstrates its tradition of hospitality. The financing of the considerable efforts required to provide for the refugees is not always easy.

<sup>1</sup> These prisons included Mokolo Main Prison, Mora Main Prison, Mantoum Main Prison, Bantangté Main Prison, Dschang Main Prison, Guider Main Prison, Ambam Main Prison, Ébolowa Main Prison, Mamfe Main Prison, Kondengui Central Prison and Foubot Secondary Prison

36. With respect to the option of voluntary return, Cameroon, Nigeria and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) signed a tripartite agreement on 2 March 2017. There have been voluntary returns of Nigerian refugees who have left the Minawao camp for their areas of origin, such as Banki and Pulka. Cameroon is working with all stakeholders to implement the agreement and will continue to honour its commitments in this regard. All these actions highlight the State party's clear commitment to observing the principle of non-refoulement.

37. In this regard, by circular No. 190256/DV/MINDEF/01 of 18 January 2019 addressed to all the defence and security services for which he is responsible, the Minister of Defence has unequivocally instructed military commanders in the Far North to clearly instruct military personnel deployed in that Region not to carry out any forcible expulsions of Nigerians in violation of the principle of non-refoulement.

#### **Additional information on paragraph 18 (b) of the concluding observations**

38. Refugees and asylum seekers enjoy the same rights as nationals. In this context, they are subject to domestic laws and may be prosecuted if they violate them, but they may also turn to the courts for recourse for infringements of their rights and are entitled to a fair trial.

39. To ensure that refugees and asylum seekers are protected from cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, investigations are launched when their rights are violated.

40. With regard to means of recourse, legal aid is provided to refugees and asylum seekers who need it. An agreement between UNHCR and a law firm on the provision of legal aid to refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced persons in conflict with the law was signed in 2017.

#### **Additional information on paragraph 12 (c) of the concluding observations**

41. The registration and identification of applicants for asylum in Cameroon is a key responsibility of the State. Consequently, the Department of National Security has been registering persons entering the country and protecting them during their stay for years. In addition, a technical secretariat was set up within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to assist the Refugee Status Eligibility Commission and the Refugee Appeals Commission. It works in collaboration with UNHCR. UNHCR has also been involved in registration. For example, at the Gourounguel Transit Centre in the Far North Region, 9,033 new asylum seekers housed at the Minawao site were registered between 1 and 31 October 2018. In November 2018, UNHCR began the biometric registration<sup>2</sup> of those living outside the site, including in the department of Logone-et-Chari; 44,830 refugees were registered.

#### **Additional information on paragraph 18 (d) of the concluding observations**

42. In order to provide an appropriate response to the humanitarian crisis in the Far North, Adamaoua, East and North Regions and ensure that refugees are received in a manner consistent with principles of humanity, the national authorities, with the support of UNHCR, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and the International Committee of the Red Cross, have held capacity-building sessions for police officers, members of the military and border officials. The training modules focus on refugee law, the domestic legal framework for refugee protection, the acquisition and loss of refugee status, asylum procedures, the principle of non-refoulement and the protection of women and children from violence in the context of humanitarian crises.

43. Between February and December 2017, approximately 400 national security employees (police officers) received training in how to protect refugees from violence. The training, provided in sessions organized by UN-Women, also covered asylum rules and procedures.

44. In 2018, UNHCR trained 100 members of the defence and security forces and officials based at the border posts in the Far North Region on the protection of persons of concern to

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<sup>2</sup> The biometric registration of refugees from the Central African Republic began in February 2016 in Adamaoua and the East and North Regions.

UNHCR, the role of law enforcement bodies and defence and security forces in securing camps and settlement sites, and the civilian and humanitarian character of asylum and of the camps.

45. UNHCR provided awareness-raising and training for 120 members of law enforcement bodies and security and defence forces working in and around the Minawao camps on the various refugee protection documents and legal instruments.

46. Similarly, in May and October 2018 in the city of Maroua, 80 people involved in efforts to coordinate civilian and military action were provided with training and tools related to international protection and the civilian character of asylum, settlement sites and camps.

#### **Additional information on paragraph 18 (e) of the concluding observations**

47. The aim of government policy, in addition to intervening to provide humanitarian assistance, is to empower refugees. To this end, an ad hoc interministerial committee was set up by the Head of State by Order No. 269 of 13 March 2014. This committee is responsible for examining humanitarian, socioeconomic, health and security challenges and the legitimate concerns raised by the presence of refugee populations, with a view to proposing suitable measures to the Government.

48. On 27 September 2017, the Government and UNHCR approved a multi-year, multi-partner protection strategy for the period from 2017 to 2020. The proposed strategy has five objectives, including the gradual closure of refugee camps in communities. The aim is to move gradually away from confining refugees to camps and towards integrating them into communities and thereby to combat stigmatization.

49. The Government and its partners have continued to work to improve living conditions in Minawao camp, which housed 60,000 refugees in 2016, through the self-empowerment of refugees. This approach links humanitarian assistance and development, ensuring that host communities are not put at a disadvantage.

50. Income-generating activities were promoted by some host community leaders in 2017 through the distribution of plots of land for agriculture and animal husbandry. In addition, 100 beneficiaries, including 60 refugees and 40 host community members who were divided into five groups, received assistance from the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and UNHCR for agricultural activities such as maize cultivation. Furthermore, 495 direct beneficiaries divided into 95 groups of five people, including refugees and host community members, received assistance from UNHCR for small-scale trade under a project for self-empowerment through income-generating activities set up by Plan Cameroon. UN-Women also offered refugees on the site improved homes and buildings worth CFAF 100 million.

51. The health situation in the Minawao camp began to improve in 2015. Improvements were made to the water supply to reduce the prevalence of diseases related to limited access to water and sanitation, such as cholera. The network was extended by 4 km with the construction of 10 additional water points and the installation of a 70 m<sup>3</sup> cistern. The drinking water sources (32 wells and 36 taps) installed in the camp by UNHCR partners produce an average of 835 m<sup>3</sup> of water per day, or 14 litres per person per day. Each of these water points reaches an average of 1,066 people. In addition, the construction of the Mokolo-Minawao drinking water supply point was completed in 2017.

#### **Additional information on paragraphs 19 and 20 (a) of the concluding observations**

52. Since 2016, the North-West and South-West Regions of Cameroon have been beset by social and political troubles. This situation is related to the demands made by organizations of lawyers and teachers, to which the Government, through consultations and dialogue with the trade unions concerned, provided appropriate responses.

53. Unexpectedly, those demands gradually became political demands, culminating in a call to secede from the State.

54. By late 2018, the toll taken by the crisis included losses among both civilians and members of the defence and security forces. In terms of physical damage, private property and public buildings were destroyed. In addition, the crisis in these Regions led to the

displacement of populations, with some remaining in Cameroon and others going to Nigeria, specifically to the States of Cross River and Benue, where there are some 7,200 Cameroonian refugees.

55. The State, confronted with this situation, has had to intervene to preserve its territorial integrity and protect persons and property, in accordance with its international commitments. Any misconduct by members of the defence and security forces incurs disciplinary and judicial penalties. For example:

- Kévin D., Eric K., Franz S.M., Ebenezer A.G. and Martial Hervé B., all gendarmes, were prosecuted at Buea Military Court for acts of torture and ill-treatment committed on 12 May 2018 in the locality of Nkongle (Lebialem Department) against Tsobonyi Alphonse Tatia, known as “Title Man” or “General”, a leader of the armed wing of the secessionists who has been implicated in the abduction of civilians and the killing of defence and security personnel; under judgment No. 006/19 of 22 January 2019, the gendarmes were found guilty of insubordination and torture and were given suspended sentences of 3 years’ imprisonment
- After it was alleged that, on 4 September 2017, an improper discharge of a firearm had led to the death of a man during an operation conducted by a unit of gendarmes from Bui to arrest marijuana growers in the village of Kifen (Bui Department), the commander of the unit was relieved of duty, and he and his gendarmes were brought before Bamenda Military Court
- On 25 June 2018, a non-commissioned officer serving in the Field Artillery Regiment of Nkongsamba (Moungo Department), suspected of sexually abusing a young woman in Tombel (Kupe-Muanenguba Department), where he was deployed, was brought before the Yaoundé Military Court, where legal proceedings are under way
- Charges were brought against Private First Class Arthur M. for the suspected rape of a 17-year-old girl in the locality of Nkwen, Bamenda. During a routine check, he had forced the victim, who did not have a national identity card, to have sexual relations with him under threat of being held by the patrol. He was placed in pretrial detention pending the outcome of his trial at Bamenda Military Court

#### **Additional information on paragraph 20 (b) of the concluding observations**

56. Efforts are being made to have persons taken into custody brought promptly before the courts. Under article 122 of Act No. 2005/007, the Code of Criminal Procedure, persons in detention are informed of the accusations against them and appear in court as soon as possible. Sometimes, the complexity of a case can delay a detainee’s court appearance.

57. To protect the rights of individuals facing trial, interpreters are provided for those who do not understand the language of the court. In the case of detainees, this enables them to understand the nature of the charges against them and what is said throughout the trial.

58. In some places of detention, information about arrests and investigations is posted, a procedure that may help detainees understand whether their arrests were unlawful. Individuals who consider their arrests to have been unlawful are entitled to apply for habeas corpus in accordance with articles 584 to 588 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

59. In addition, anyone unlawfully placed in pretrial detention or police custody may approach the Compensation Commission, which functions under article 237 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. The Commission is operational.

60. The competent authorities have provided relief in cases of unusually prolonged detention, such as that of Basile Étienne Anol and Ekanga 1, held in Douala Central Prison since 31 October 2013 and 22 December 2016, respectively.

#### **Additional information on paragraph 20 (c) of the concluding observations**

61. The right to protest peacefully is guaranteed under Act No. 90/053 of 19 December 1990, on demonstrations and public assemblies. Act No. 2014/028 of 23 December 2014, on the suppression of terrorist acts, was adopted not to limit the exercise of public freedoms but to punish the terrorist acts defined therein.

62. Article 2 (1) of the latter Act defines an act of terrorism as any act or the threat of any act that may cause death, endanger physical integrity or cause bodily harm or damage to property, natural resources, the environment or cultural heritage and is intended:
- (a) To intimidate the public, provoke terror or compel the victim, the Government and/or a national or international organization to take or refrain from taking a given step, to adopt or abandon a position or to act according to certain principles;
  - (b) To disrupt the normal functioning of public services or the delivery of essential services to the public or to create a public emergency;
  - (c) To create general insurrection in the country.

The Act gives military courts jurisdiction over acts of terrorism.

63. With respect to the crisis in the South-West and North-West Regions, the initial demands of English-speaking lawyers' and teachers' unions have turned into secessionist demands, backed by arms and involving acts that fall within the description set out in the Act. Armed gangs were formed to attack security forces, people and property. The security situation deteriorated rapidly in the two Regions as a result of the acts of violence perpetrated by the protesters: the targeted killings and murders of students and teachers aspiring to exercise their right to education, the destruction and burning of property, looting, rape, the ransoming of hostages and reprisals against the population and the security and defence forces. In short, serious acts of terrorism have been committed, and organized crime has made inroads. From the outset of the troubles to 11 July 2018, 109 members of the defence and security forces were killed; some 100 schools were burned down; prisons, five courthouses and hundreds of homes were destroyed; and some 100 military-style weapons were taken.

64. The Government, as the guarantor of the security of persons and property and the country's territorial integrity, had to intervene to restore order and security, as well as to return property to the people and to institutions. The persons arrested were brought to justice in accordance with the laws in force. Those who committed terrorist acts were prosecuted in military courts, and the others in civilian courts. In either case, the proceedings against these persons were conducted in full fairness and in a manner respectful of their rights.

65. As of 10 July 2018, courts martial had been instituted against 965 persons involved in 343 different cases. Verdicts, including 30 acquittals, had been reached in 114 of those cases.

#### **Additional information on paragraph 20 (d) of the concluding observations**

66. In Cameroon, order is maintained by law enforcement bodies composed of first- and second-category forces – namely, the police and the National Gendarmerie. These forces are placed under administrative authorities that are empowered to call on them in the event of breaches of public order.

67. During both their initial and their in-service training, members of these law enforcement bodies are instructed in their role during gatherings and demonstrations and in the use of force.

68. Under Act No. 90/54 of 19 December 1990, on the maintenance of law and order, the use of weapons is prohibited in routine law enforcement operations. However, weapons may be used at the express request of the administrative authority in the following cases if members of the law enforcement bodies cannot otherwise defend themselves:

- Where assaults against members of law enforcement are widespread and serious
- Where firearms are used against law enforcement bodies

#### **Additional information on paragraphs 39 and 40 of the concluding observations**

69. Cameroon signed the Optional Protocol to the Convention on 15 December 2009. The procedure to deposit the instruments of ratification is in progress.

70. It was decided that the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms would be designated as the national preventive mechanism for the prevention of torture under the Optional Protocol. The process to put the mechanism into place is under way, along with the concurrent process to amend the law under which the Commission was established.

71. Despite the security constraints it faces, particularly the struggle against the terrorist group Boko Haram and the armed secessionist movement in the North-West and South-West Regions, Cameroon is determined to keep persons and property secure and preserve its territorial integrity. In this legitimate quest, however, Cameroon does not intend to neglect its efforts to promote and protect human rights in general and to fight torture and other ill-treatment in particular. Its determination to make such efforts, whether in the struggle against the impunity of defence and security personnel or in the hospitality it has traditionally provided to victims of involuntary displacement, is as strong as ever. These are humanitarian issues, and, as the burden involved in responding to them is sometimes greater than what the country can bear, greater solidarity is called for.

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