

**Gender Empowerment and Development (GeED)  
Solidarité pour la promotion des droits de l'Homme et des peuples  
(PRODHOP)  
Centre for Civil and Political Rights (CCPR Centre)**

**Implementation of the Civil and Political Rights in Cameroon: United Nations raises serious concerns.**

Geneva, 21 July 2010 – Between the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> of July, during its 99<sup>th</sup> session, the *UN Human Rights Committee* examined the implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in Cameroon. This was the fourth periodic review of Cameroon, the previous review dating back to 1999.

*Solidarité pour la promotion des droits de l'Homme et des peuples* (PRODHOP), *Gender Empowerment and Development* (GeED) and *the Centre for Civil and Political Rights* (CCPR Centre) seized the opportunity to submit a report on the situation of Human Rights in Cameroon.

This report highlights that violations of freedom of expression and discrimination are widespread both in the legal sphere and everyday life. In addition, the Committee expressed serious concern as to laws that criminalize homosexuality, and the Committee did not consider the assurances made by the government as satisfactory. “The prohibition on homosexuality in Cameroon is not a prohibition on an activity, but an identity, thus the entire Covenant is triggered in this issue. The principle of universality is being undermined”, says one of the experts.

Moreover, the Committee repeatedly expressed their concern for the independence of *Elections Cameroon* (ELECAM) that is in charge of the supervision and organization of elections in Cameroon. “In the upcoming elections, ELECAM should be replaced with an Independent National Electoral Commission”, says Maximilienne Ngo Mbe, representative of PRODHOP.

Furthermore, the Committee frequently underlined the importance of women’s rights and that the draft Code of the Family should be adopted without delay. Tilder Ndichia, representative of the GeED, further emphasized the importance of anti-discriminatory laws: “the Code of the Family that addresses discrimination of women needs to be adopted as soon as possible, since women are both legally and factually in a very unfavourable situation in today’s Cameroon”.

The Human Rights Committee has repeatedly stressed the right to enjoy the freedoms of association and expression, which remain matters of concern. Human Rights associations have identified several restrictions to these rights imposed over the past months in Cameroon, which illustrate the current problems. Many journalists are detained in Cameroon and government officials use strict libel laws to suppress criticism. The safety of human rights defenders is also a great concern of the civil society.

The conclusions and recommendations of the Human Rights Committee will be made public at the end of the session. Cameroon must implement these recommendations as rapidly as possible in order to comply with its international obligations.

The report can be found on our site:

[http://www.ccprcentre.org/doc/HRC/Cameroon/NGO%20Information/Report\\_bilingual\\_final\\_Cameroon.pdf](http://www.ccprcentre.org/doc/HRC/Cameroon/NGO%20Information/Report_bilingual_final_Cameroon.pdf)

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