

## **Declaration for “Violence-Free Elections.” 2007 Parliamentary/Municipal Elections in Cameroon**

The supporters of this declaration,

Mindful of:

- Decree No 73/658 of 22 October 1973 regulating the importation, sales, transfer, detention and holding of firearms and ammunition in Cameroon;
- Law No 97/21, relating to Private Security companies;
- 16 December 1991 Law fixing the conditions for elections into the National Assembly
- Law N° 96/06 of 18 January 1996 amending the Constitution of 2 June 1972;
- Law N° 2000/016 of 19 December 2000 instituting the - NEO - National Elections Observatory (Observatoire National des Elections - ONEL);
- Law N° 2000/015 of 19 December 2000 related to the financing of parties and elections;
- Decree N° 2001/306 of 8 October 2001 stating the modes of enforcement of Law No. 2000/16 of 19 December 2000 setting up a National Elections Observatory (NEO);
- Decree N° 2001/397 of 20 December 2001 related to the composition and the functioning of provincial and local structures of the Observatoire National des Elections (ONEL);
- Law N° 2003/015 of 22 December 2003 amending the Law N° 2000/016 related to the Observatoire National des Elections;
- The international Pact on Civil and Political Rights and the optional Protocol ratified by Cameroon on 21 June 1984

We the members of the Cameroon Action Network on Small Arms (CANSACAM), accredited member of the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSACAM), have noted with keen interest that over the years during elections, small arms circulating in the hands of private individuals, armed gangs, forces of law and order are some times being misuse to justify violence, torture and human rights abuse.

*Recalling* that gun violence imposes a terrible human cost on Cameroon, through death, injury and intimidation;

*Further recalling* that pre and post elections gun violence has plagued recent elections in Cameroon, disrupting the democratic process and undermining good governance since 1992 to present date,

*In particular recalling* the violence that marred the 1992 Presidential elections in Bamenda, Bafoussam, Bertoua, Douala, Kumbo etc.; 1996 Municipal elections in Douala, Limbe, Kumba etc; 1997 and 2002 Parliamentary Elections in Bali Kumbat and many other parts in Cameroon and the 2004 Presidential elections

*Noting* that the right to vote is undermined if insecurity and intimidation prevails during elections,

*Noting* that in the 1994 Declaration of criteria for free and fair elections, adopted by the Inter-Parliamentary Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), States have a responsibility to ensure ‘that voters are able to cast their ballots freely, without fear or intimidation.’

*Further noting* that the National Elections Observatory (NEO) is responsible for ensuring free and fair elections, and that this task would be assisted if the elections were gun-free;

Accordingly, we urge that the government, all political parties and civil society adopt the following actions to help ensure that the 2007 National Assembly elections are free from gun violence:

*that* the government and all political parties must be proactively committed to elections free from violence.

*that* all voting stations should be declared Gun Free Zones. Anyone found carrying a gun within 300 metres of a voting station should be considered to be committing an offence and be arrested by the police. This should apply to every citizen, without exception.

*that* the government support our public campaign to discourage carrying and using guns during the election campaign, including the period of the elections themselves and also the period following the announcement of the results.

Signed by:

Cameroon Youths and Students Forum for Peace  
(CAMYOSFOP)  
Ecumenical Service for Peace (SeP)  
Trauma Centre  
Catholic Justice and Peace Commission  
Ecole d’instrument de la Paix  
Women in Alternative Action (WAA)  
Network for Human Rights and Development  
World Dynamic for Young People (WDYP)  
Cameroon Youth Confederation (CYC)  
The Post Newspaper  
Post Magazine  
Eden Newspaper

NGALIM Eugene N  
Dupleix Kuenzob  
Peter Kum Che  
Prof. Titi Nwel  
Catherine Moto Ze  
Kwachu Justine  
Peter Esoka  
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