



TWENTY FOURTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE NCHRF

FINAL COMMUNIQUE

The National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms (NCHRF) held its 24th Ordinary Session in Yaounde from the 8th to the 9th of May 2018, presided over by its Chairperson, Dr Chemuta Divine BANDA.

Among the issues discussed were: the examination and adoption of the 2017 reports of the Commission (Activity and the State of Human Rights in Cameroon), the examination and adoption of the 2017 administrative and management accounts of the Commission, the examination of the draft 2019 budget ; the follow-up of resolutions and recommendations of the 23rd Ordinary Session, the examination and adoption of the report on the most recurrent alleged violations of human rights in Cameroon between 2014 and 2016, the adoption of the complaint management procedure at the Human Rights Commission and the election of Chairpersons and Rapporteurs of Working Groups.

In his opening statement, Dr BANDA pointed out that this session was holding at a time when the country is facing serious security challenges leading to the present degrading economic situation characterized by the inability of populations to circulate and undertake activities freely. In this regards, he invited human rights defenders to reinforce their actions of sensitization of the population on the respect of their rights.

Dr BANDA regretted the escalation of violence which led to the death of some elements of the armed forces as well as some civilians and the unprecedented massive displacement of people with thousands becoming refugees out of the country. The Chairperson once more called for peaceful and inclusive dialogue.

Members of the Commission were informed that Cameroon will be undergoing the Universal Periodic Review this May 2018 in Geneva, during which the Human Rights Commission will be taking part.

As regards the protection of human rights, Dr BANDA recounted that the Commission continued treating complaints, initiated investigations on some cases and conducted field visits. In this connection, a delegation undertook a fact finding mission on the crisis situation in the South

West and North West Regions on 5 – 8 February 2018. Another mission was undertaken to the Far North Region on 9 – 13 April 2018 to visit the population of Maga displaced by floods.

Prison visits were also carried out in Monatele in the Centre Region on 18 January 2018; in Bertoua, Doumé, Abong-Mbang in the East Region on 23 – 26 January 2018 as well as in Maroua in the Far North Region.

The Chairperson said that in violation of law n° 2004/016 of 22 July 2004 to set up the NCHRF, the NCHRF was refused access to some places of detention in Yaounde by some competent authorities. This was in the cases of some detainees on hunger strike, the forty seven suspects repatriated from Nigeria as well as, a victim who was shot and hospitalized at the Yaounde Emergency Centre.

In the domain of human rights promotion, it was reported that the NCHRF carried out a series of activities at the national, regional and international levels.

Cooperation between the NCHRF and partners like the Network of African National Human Rights Institutions (NANHRI), the Commonwealth Forum of NHRIs, the Association Francophone des Institutions Nationales des Droits de l'Homme, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and the Global Alliance of NHRIs was strengthened:

Among other things, members were informed of the inauguration of the Far North Regional branch office on the 25th of April 2018. Besides, Chairpersons and Rapporteurs of Working Groups were elected.

In view of the continuation of deliberations on the 9th of May 2018, a committee of six (06) members was setup to draft a document addressed to the Head of state on difficulties affecting the functioning of the NCHRF. Their report was presented.

In conclusion, the Chairperson called on members and the Permanent Secretariat of the NCHRF to remain devoted at work.



Eva J. Etongue Mayer