

REPUBLIQUE DU CAMEROUN
Paix – Travail – Patrie

PRESIDENCE DE LA REPUBLIQUE

COMMISSION NATIONALE POUR LA
PROMOTION DU BILINGUISME ET
DU MULTICULTURALISME

SECRETARIAT GENERAL



REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON
Peace– Work – Fatherland

PRESIDENCY OF THE REPUBLIC

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE
PROMOTION OF BILINGUALISM AND
MULTICULTURALISM

GENERAL SECRETARIAT

LISTEN TO THE PEOPLE'S MISSION
LAUNCHING OF THE MISSION IN BAMENDA,
HEADQUARTERS OF THE NORTH WEST REGION

FINAL COMMUNIQUE

On Wednesday 30, Thursday 31 May and Friday 1 June 2018, the President of the National Commission for the Promotion of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism (NCPBM) H.E. **Peter MAFANY MUSONGE**, accompanied by the Members of the Commission as well as the Secretary General of the Commission undertook a "Listen to the People's" mission to Bamenda, headquarters of the North West Region. This Mission follows that which took place in Buea in April 2018.

The main objective of the exercise is to collect information of any nature likely to enable the Commission to know the state of affairs on the practice of bilingualism, multiculturalism and living together in Cameroon, with a view to developing a National Strategic Plan for the promotion of bilingualism, multiculturalism and living together.

LAUNCHING AND DELIBERATIONS

The mission to Bamenda began on Wednesday 30th May 2018 with a working session between the NCPBM and the local administrative authorities headed by the Governor of the Region.

The launching proper took place in the Multipurpose Hall of the PCC Ntamulung neighbourhood in Bamenda on Thursday 31st May 2018, chaired by the President of the Commission in the presence of the Governor and his close collaborators, traditional, religious and political leaders and a cross section of the population.

After the singing of the National anthem and prayers by Muslims and Christians, the meeting began with a speech from the President of the Commission who

expressed gratitude to the participants for their massive turnout, proof of the fact that the population approves of the meet-the-people initiative. He called on all present to freely express themselves on bilingualism, multiculturalism, living together and on any issues they deemed important, especially the current crisis rocking the Region. He equally requested for possible and concrete proposals that could be implemented so as to hasten the end to the present stalemate, which is hurting the social and economic development of the Region. He concluded that the suggestions that would emerge from the meeting would be faithfully channelled to the President of the Republic.

The President of the Commission then informed the participants that the Commission will be in the Region for two days and will be receiving individuals and groups privately after the morning session of the deliberations.

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM PARTICIPANTS

After the opening ceremony, the practical phase of the exercise, moderated by the President of the Commission himself began in earnest. The floor was then given to whoever wanted to take it, among the more than 800 persons in attendance.

Over 35 (thirty five) participants, amongst whom were the Chairman of the SDF, Members of Parliament, university dons, traditional rulers and religious leaders, bike riders, "*bayam sellams*", journalists, the youths, members of the civil society, businessmen, etc. took the floor in plenary and in all freedom, expressed their views on the various issues of the day.

Most speakers of the day appreciated the creation of the Commission and expressed the wish that the come-together would not be just another waste of time, because they feel that several of such meetings have been held and petitions forwarded to hierarchy but which have not yielded any fruit as of now. They however thanked the NCPBM, for coming to listen to them, in their own base.

Issues raised hinged on:

- the distortion of the political history of Cameroon;
- the poor practice of bilingualism in our country with a predominance of the French language;
- the lack of patriotism in the behaviour of some leaders;
- unemployment of qualified youths;
- lack of infrastructural development in the Region;
- bribery, corruption, tribalism and nepotism ;
- marginalisation of English speaking Cameroonians;

- the feeling of not being loved by their French speaking brothers;
- injustice against English speaking Cameroonians;
- harassment by some members of the forces of law and order;
- harassment by some unidentified armed groups;
- the taking of Anglophones for granted;
- arrogance in the management of the crisis;
- the transfer to the Region of military and police officers who speak only the French language;
- the absence of equal opportunity in the access to public office;
- the tendency to neglect the Anglophone sub-system of education in government competitive examinations;
- the lack of respect for Anglophones by certain Administrative Authorities;
- the superiority complex of Francophones towards Anglophones;
- the complete absence of industries in the Region;
- the clarification of the notions of terrorists, secessionists etc.

The second part of the deliberations that started in the afternoon at the AYABA Hotel was devoted to audiences granted by the President of the Commission as well as the three Working Groups (Bilingualism, Multiculturalism and Living together), to individuals and groups.

They raised a series of pertinent issues as to the state of affairs on the practice of bilingualism, multiculturalism, living together and most especially, the current crisis in the Region.

The participants equally made several useful verbal and written suggestions on the possible ways of promoting bilingualism, multiculturalism and living together, and especially on ways of bringing a speedy end to the crisis, which is wreaking untold hardship on the population of the North West Region.

Among the proposals made were pleas to government to:

- provide an enabling environment for internally displaced persons to return to their homes;
- examine issues concerning federalism in our country;
- urgently address the basic concerns raised for peace to return;
- organise frank, sincere and inclusive dialogue between the government and the Anglophones, including those of the Diaspora for long-lasting solutions to the current crisis;
- revisit the management of teachers who are caught between their hierarchy and the armed groups;

- speed up infrastructural development in the Region;
- repeal the law on terrorism;
- grant general amnesty to those people within and out of the country jailed or in exile in connection with the crisis;
- seek solutions to enable the villagers in hiding to return to their homes;
- instruct Public Corporations and Establishments to conduct and transact business in the two official languages;
- bring back to the country Cameroonians who are refugees in Nigeria;
- make sure that patriotism is the watchword of all public officials;
- give the possibility to Cameroonians abroad to have double nationality;
- make sure that the unity of the country is based on equity and fairness;
- let the NCPBM effectively put in place the devolved services in the organigram;
- revisit the history of Cameroon;
- instill change of attitude in the management of public affairs;
- bring back the remains of the former President AMADOU AHIDJO to the country, etc.

A clarion call was made for the President of the Republic to come to the Region and address "His children".

The second stage of the Listen to the people mission ended on Friday 1st June 2018.

Done in Bamenda on Friday June 1st 2018



Peter Mafany Messongo