

Stuttgart: nearly 7,000 signatories for peace appeal in Cameroon

A call for peace and justice in Cameroon has been signed by almost 7,000 people nationwide in German. At the presentation of the result of signatory action on Tuesday in Stuttgart, the development policy spokesman of the FDP parliamentary group, Dr Christoph Hoffmann, called on the German Chancellor Angela Merkel to visit Cameroon and endeavour to pave a way forward for peace in conflict driven country. According to statements by local politicians, this could give an impetus to dialogue by the fractious parties.

The petition calls on the federal government to foster the rule of law in Cameroon and to the churches to invite representatives of churches and non-governmental organizations in the country and to show solidarity with the victims of the conflict. The call was launched after a meeting with the President of the banned Cameroon Anglophone Civil Society Consortium Barrister Nkongho Felix Agbor-Balla (President and Founder of the Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Africa) in March this year by the German branch of the Basel Mission together with political, religious bodies, development and civil society organizations. In Cameroon, since October 2016, there has been a violent conflict between the formerly British part (former Southern Cameroon) of the country and the formerly French part (La Republic du Cameroun) with a predominantly French-speaking government.

The FDP (Liberal Democratic Party) politician Dr Hoffmann reiterated that Cameroon is currently suffering from three conflicts. In addition to the conflict between Anglophone and Francophones, there is the terror of Boko Haram in the north as well as the influx of the refugees from the neighbouring Central African Republic, which also suffers from crises. The Stuttgart CDU (Christian Democratic Party) member of the federal parliament Dr Stefan Kaufmann promised to campaign for a handover of the signatories to a member of the Federal Government.

Rev Klaus Rieth, who is responsible for mission and ecumenism at the Upper Church Council of the Evangelical Church in Württemberg, said that Cameroon was the "most visited country in Africa" by Wuerttemberg church representatives. Five church districts and at least twenty parishes maintained direct partnerships with churches in the country. The state church is now investing in the thousands of Euro for peace and democracy projects in unstable countries. "Sea rescue begins on the spot," said Rieth.

Dr Joy Alemazung, who is responsible for development-related education in Baden-Württemberg under the mandate of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, sees the future of his homeland Cameroon threatened by years of closed schools. "If children are not allowed access to education, then the country is doomed" he said. He and Rev Johannes Stahl from Basel Mission Germany initiated the German call for peace through justice in Cameroon.

Fundamental reasons behind the conflict in former West Cameroon/Southern Cameroon include bad Governance, lack of rule of law and respect for human rights as well as missing democratic action. There are increasing allegations of the English-speaking minority that the government unilaterally prefers the French-speaking majority in the country and marginalises the English population and the English region. According to current information from the UNHCR - OCHA half a million people are on the run, 50,000 crossed borders to Nigeria, 2,000 were killed. At least 600,000 boys and girls can not attend school because of ongoing conflict.



Photo (BMDZ) from left to right:

Rev Dieter Bullard Werner Basel Mission Germany, Steffi Feiler Partnership Öhringen & Batibo, Eric Shu Fon Chairman PCC Stuttgart, Parliamentarian Dr. Christoph Hoffmann FDP, Dr. Joy Alemazung Global Governance Institute Brussels-Stuttgart, Parliamentarian Dr Stefan Kaufmann CDU, Eckehart Lauk Executive Chair BMDZ, Rev Johannes Stahl Basel Mission Germany, Annemone Hilsenbeck Partnership Göppingen & Menchum

Program of official handing over of result of signatory action (English Version)

Tuesday 23rd of July 2019, Stuttgart (Germany)

- 15.30** **Meet and greet**
- 16.00** **Welcome Note** – Rev. Dieter Bullard-Werner (Chair BMDZ)
- 16.05** **Introduction** – Dr. Joy Alemazung, Global Governance Institute Brussels
- 16.15** **Presentation** of result of signatory action to representatives from German Federal Parliament – Rev. Johannes Stahl
- 16.25** **Report** of visit to Cameroon by Parliamentarians of the German Federal Parliament – Dr. Christoph Hoffmann, Parliamentarian (Liberal Party) and Chairman of the German Parliamentary Group „Central Africa“
- 16.40** **Statements from:**
 - Politics: Dr. Stefan Kaufmann, Member of the German Federal Parliament (Christian Democratic Union)
 - Humans Rights Watch, London - Ilaria Allegrozzi (excused)
 - Church Institutions: Canon Rev Klaus Rieth Evangelical Lutheran Church in Württemberg (ELKW)
 - Presbyterian Church in Cameroon (PCC)
 - partner presbyteries: Goepingen & Menchum; Tuebingen & East Mungo West; Oehringen & Batibo
- 17.10**
- 17.20** **Perspectives**
- Closing remarks**



Photo (EMS) from left to right:

Dr. Joy Alemazung
Rev. Dieter Bullard-Werner
MP Dr. Christoph Hoffmann
MP Dr. Stefan Kaufmann

APPRECIATIONS

“I want to thank the following people/groups for their concern and commitment towards resolving the crisis in Southern Cameroons. In fact, they have proven that the essence of life lies in humanity. I really appreciate them for the great sacrifices they are making for the people of Southern Cameroons. I want to let them know that the people of Southern Cameroons recognise and appreciate this. Even if we're completely wipe out as the situation is revealing on the ground, we will know that someone somewhere had us at heart. To you all, I say thank you!

They're:

MP Dr. Stefan Kaufmann of CDU

MP Dr. Christoph Hoffmann of FDP

Ilaria Allegrozzi, Human Rights Watch

Dr. Joy Alemazung, Global Governance Institute Brussels

Kirchenrat Klaus Rieth, ELKW

Eric Shu Fon of PCC Stuttgart and SCCG e.V

Annemone Hilsenbeck of Cameroon Partnership Göppingen-Menchum

Margret Wolf of Cameroon Partnership Tübingen-East Mungo West

Steffi Feiler of Cameroon Partnership Öhringen-Batibo

Rev. Father Dieter Bullard-Werner of Basel Mission Germany (BMDZ)

Rev. Father Johannes Stahl of Basel Mission Germany (BMDZ)

The entire family of Basel Mission German Branch

The meeting of Tuesday 23rd July 2019 is one of the series of initiatives that have been carried out by Basel Mission Germany (BMDZ). You have created a website www.brennpunktkamerun.org where you report about the crisis and you have run a project 7,000 signatures through which you have collected signatures to influence intervention on the crisis. I salute your sacrifices!

As already noted by MP Christoph Hoffmann during his visit to Cameroon last May, Cameroonian Parliament has never held a single meeting to discuss on resolving the issue. He added that it looks crazy to him that he was talking about lives and the Speaker of Parliament Cameroon was crying over a small portion of his gate that was damaged by Boko Haram in the North. It is really shameful.

Cameroon cannot solve this problem that it created voluntarily and therefore we rely on your continuous sacrifices to help us restore peace.

Thank you”

George Mbaka Ebechue