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BABIES BEHIND BARS: CAMEROONIAN AUTHORITIES DETAIN 7 UNARMED CIVILIANS, INCLUDING 2 INFANTS IN NDOP, NGOKETUNJIA DIVISION, NORTH WEST REGION OF CAMEROON,

WE WISH TO BRING TO THE ATTENTION OF NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AS FOLLOWS:

1. That according to reliable sources and eyewitnesses, 7 unarmed civilians, including two infants aged 3 months and 2 months, were illegally arrested by Defense and Security forces at Mufuo quarter, Bamessing Village;
2. That they are currently detained at the Ndop Gendarmerie Brigade, Ngoketunjia Division, North West Region. The victims include: Madam Seraph Woh (68 years), Julius Weyang, a Mechanic working at Upper Noun Valley Development Authority (UNVDA) Ndop (39 years), Joycelyn Ndum (22 years, mother of the 3-month-old baby), Blanche Yocnteh (22 years, mother of the 2-month-old baby), and Justine Bechu (24 years);
3. That the incident occurred around 11 am on Tuesday, June 24, 2025. Julius Weyang was first arrested at his garage in Ndop and taken to Bamessing Village, where other civilians were also arrested and allegedly tortured by Defense and Security forces, eyewitnesses say;
4. That sources indicate that some victims, including the babies, are already sick due to poor detention conditions. This incident follows the kidnapping of about 14 unarmed civilians by armed separatists under the leadership of "General A Nova Die" earlier that day at about 7 am in Sabga Hill, Turbah sub division, Northwest region. The kidnapped civilians were later released after ransom payments, except for one person identified as a Gendarme Officer working in Ndop;
5. That our further findings suggest that the arrested individuals are family members of General "A Nova Die". The Senior Divisional Officer for Ngoketunjia Division, Mr. Kongeh Handerson Qwetong, has vowed to publicly execute the arrested civilians if the Gendarme Officer is not released. Notably, his jurisdiction has a history of public executions of unarmed civilians, with a recent case occurring on May 2025;
6. That it is essential to emphasize that "Criminal Responsibility is Personal," and no one should suffer for another person's crime. At the time of writing this report, the victims remain detained, and there has been no official reaction from local authorities;



7. That these actions violate Human Rights principles under Cameroon's Constitution, Penal Code and International law like prohibition of illegal arrests, torture and cruel treatment and Right to liberty and Security.

THAT IN VIEW OF THE ABOVE, CONSCIENCE AFRICAINE,

1. Strongly Condemns the repeated disregard for criminal procedure rules and fundamental Human Rights principles in conflict Anglophone regions by authorities, particularly the illegal arrest, torture, and arbitrary detention of Madam Seraph Woh (68 years), Julius Weyang, a mechanic working at Upper Noun Valley Development Authority (UNVDA) Ndop (39 years), Joycelyn Ndum (22 years, mother of the 3-month-old baby), Blanche Yocnteh (22 years, mother of the 2-month-old baby), and Justine Bechu (24 years), all arrested at Bamessing Village by Defense and Security forces, while demanding for their Immediate and Unconditional release;
2. Reiterate to the local authorities that "Criminal Responsibility is Personal". No one should suffer for the crimes of another person. Ensure justice and due process for all individuals;
3. Demands an end to impunity in Anglophone regions, where perpetrators of grievous human rights violations and abuses often go unpunished. And equally urging immediate and impartial investigations to hold perpetrators accountable, rather than attempting to shield perpetrators from their crimes;
4. Remind the Government of her responsibility to hold senior State officials accountable for ordering the Commission of serious crimes or failing to prosecute serious crimes committed by their subordinates. This is in line with Article 28 of the 1998 Rome Statute establishing International Criminal Court, which clearly establishes the principle of command responsibility under international law;
5. Continue to advise the belligerents forces to consistently respect International Humanitarian and Human Rights Law during attacks, while reminding them that they will ultimately be held accountable for their crimes sooner or later;
6. Remind Armed Separatists that kidnapping unarmed civilians for ransoms constitutes War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity and those responsible will be held accountable for their actions; and
7. Calls on the international community to support efforts to persuade the Yaoundé regime to engage in an inclusive and sincere dialogue with stakeholders to properly address the root causes of the armed conflict.

Done in Bamenda, this June 27, 2025.

Signed



Amadu TARNTEH, Executive Secretary



Edit with WPS Office