



PRESS RELEASE N° 009/2026

NGARBUH MASSACRE: A very shameful verdict !

We, the Coalition of Civil Society-Human Rights organizations for Peace in the Anglophone Regions, and other affected Regions (The Coalition), created in December 2019 by 32 Cameroonian Human rights CSOs because of the ongoing Anglophone crisis, wish to bring to:

THE ATTENTION OF NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY THE FOLLOWING FACTS:

1. That it was with **surprise, shock, and dismay** that the Coalition learned of the unjust verdict delivered by the Yaoundé military Tribunal on **February 19, 2026**, regarding the Ngarbuh massacre;
2. That the sentences handed down concern Sergeant **BABA GUIDA**, sentenced to eight years' imprisonment, as well as gendarme **HARANGA Gilbert** and Corporal **SANDING SANDING**, who were sentenced to **ten and five years'** imprisonment respectively, while the former secessionist combatant who had led a pro-government Ambazonian militia in Ngarbuh, Mr. **TATA NFOR Maxwell**, known as "**Bullet**," after spending more than a year at the **National Committee for Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (NDDRC)**, created by a Presidential Decree N° 2018/719 of 30th November 2018, was sentenced to **ten years'** imprisonment;
3. That they were found guilty of violating orders, inciting murder, destruction, arson, and violence against a pregnant woman, following an operation carried out on February 14, 2020, in the village of Ngarbuh 3, in the northwest of the country;
4. That following the alert received reporting a huge massacre of women and children in the **village of Ngarbuh 3**, NDU Subdivision, Ndonga-Mantum Division, in the North-West region of Cameroon, the Coalition had set up a **pro bono facts finding mission** as part of its **Monitoring, Documentation, and Reporting (MDR)** on human rights, with a view to shedding light on this horrific incident of human rights violations;
5. That according to the Coalition's report, on the night of Thursday, **February 13, 2020**, armed elements belonging to the Cameroonian army, accompanied by local herders and other pro-government armed militias, camped in the neighboring villages of **Ngar 3 (Chii and Fiiru)** and on Friday, **February 14, 2020, at around 3 a.m.**, while the villagers were asleep, an attack was launched on the village of **Ngar 3** from **Fiiru** by a joint operation composed of **six soldiers, three armed men** belonging to the ex-combatants of the Ambazonia Restoration Forces, and numerous herders ;
6. That among the **22** identified victims were **nine (9) men**, seven **(7) women**, and **six children**, including **three children** under the age of three, with several unidentified charred bodies and numerous injuries of varying severity ;

7. That the Coalition clearly express its **utter indignation** at the leniency of the sentences handed down by the military court, given that the perpetrators were all liable to life imprisonment under **Article 275** of the Cameroonian Penal Code, and that it express its **total incomprehension** at the fact that all the victims or their beneficiaries were dismissed in their civil action, with the **shameful rejection** of **1.7 billion CFA francs** (approximately \$3,049,970) in damages sought by the victims' beneficiaries, **without any legal justification**;

8. That the coalition is able to affirm that the victims' beneficiaries were never entitled to a **fair trial**, which is a fundamental guarantee enshrined in Article 7 of the ACHPR (African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights) and Article 14 of the ICCPR (International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights), all ratified by the State of Cameroon, especially since the trial, which began on December 17, 2020, and lasted more than five years, was marred by **serious irregularities** with the court's refusal to admit essential evidence, including death certificates identifying all the victims;

9. That the military judicial authorities never arrested or charged the senior officers who authorized and supervised the operation and made no effort to identify the **seventeen pro-government Fulani militiamen** accused of murder who are still at large, even though in Cameroon, accomplices to crimes face the same penalties as the principal perpetrators;

10. That the Coalition remind the Cameroonian Government that these are serious violations of human rights within the meaning of the 1948 **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)**, the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (**ICCPR**), the 1981 African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (**ACHPR**), and the 10 December 1984 Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (**CAT**), all of which have been ratified by Cameroon;

11. That under **international human rights law**, the State of Cameroon has an obligation to respect and enforce the right to life (**UDHR, ICCPR, ACHPR**);

12. That the international responsibilities and obligations of the State of Cameroon include:

- **the obligation** to provide redress to victims of gross violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law;
- **the obligation** of non-governmental agents responsible under international law to provide redress;
- Cameroon's **obligations** in terms of prevention, investigation, sanctions, remedies, and redress.

13. That furthermore, the obligations of the State of Cameroon are as follows:

- **obligation** to prevent violations;
- **obligation** to investigate, prosecute, and punish perpetrators;
- **obligation** to provide genuine access to justice for all individuals who have been victims of a violation (through impartial remedies/procedures);
- **obligation to provide full reparation to victims** ;

14. That, according to its international **commitments under binding international human rights instruments**, the Cameroonian government is **inevitably bound** by the **responsibility to protect** (often referred to as "R2P"), which rests on **three equal pillars**: **the responsibility of each state to protect its populations** (pillar I); the responsibility of the international community to assist States in protecting their populations (pillar II); and the responsibility of the international community to protect when a State manifestly fails to protect its population (pillar III);

15. That, given its international commitments under international human rights law, the Government of Cameroon has an absolute obligation to prevent the extrajudicial execution of civilians, including suspected criminals, whether by the police or other security forces, to use its security forces to ensure that people living in English-speaking regions are not killed by non-state actors such as armed groups, to investigate those responsible for extrajudicial killings and bring them to justice;

16. That, in addition to obligations under international human rights law, the conflicts taking place in both the northwest and southwest of Cameroon are non-international armed conflicts to which international humanitarian law (IHL), in particular Article 3 common to the **four Geneva Conventions of 1949**, to which all parties (the State and the secessionists) are bound by this common legal framework, and above all the Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions of August 12, 1949, relating to the protection of victims of non-international armed conflicts (Protocol II), of June 8, 1977 ;

17. That the Republic of Cameroon is a State-party to several international instruments, although it still refuses to ratify the 1998 Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and must respond clearly and compulsorily to all human rights violations;

18. That the Coalition express its utter indignation at the failure of all Cameroonian military leaders involved in these great violations to appear in court, as they should **MANDATORILY** do in light of several court rulings that hold them criminally responsible for crimes "committed by subordinates under their effective authority and control, when they failed to exercise proper control over those subordinates in cases where: (i) the superior knew that these subordinates were committing or were about to commit these crimes or deliberately neglected to take into account information that clearly indicated this; (ii) the crimes were related to activities under his effective responsibility and control, and (iii) the superior failed to take all necessary and reasonable measures within his power to prevent or punish their commission or to refer them to the competent authorities for investigation and prosecution." reinforced by Article 28 of the International Criminal Court on the responsibility of military and other leaders ;

19. That international law provides for the duty to provide adequate reparation as a legal consequence of any unlawful act committed by the State. An act of the State that gives rise to its legal responsibility is any act committed by an organ of that State, "whether that organ exercises legislative, executive, judicial, or other functions, whatever its position in the organization of the State and whatever its nature as an organ of the central government or of a local authority of the State." This means that any behavior, whether lawful or unlawful (*ultra vires*), act or omission, may constitute a violation of human rights;

20. That the UN document entitled "Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law" (hereinafter referred to as the UN Principles on Reparation) stipulates that reparation includes "the following forms: restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction, and guarantees of non-repetition";

21. That according to point 18 of the said principles, " *Victims of abuse of power are persons who, individually or collectively, have suffered harm, including physical or mental injury, moral suffering, material loss, or serious impairment of their fundamental rights, as a result of acts or omissions that do not yet constitute a violation of national criminal law but represent violations of internationally recognized human rights standards*";

22. That the Coalition clearly remind the Cameroonian Government that point 8 of the UN Principles on Reparation combines human rights standards and the concept of victim contained in the Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power as follows: *"For the purposes of this document, victims are persons who have suffered individually or collectively harm, including physical or mental injury, emotional suffering, economic loss or substantial impairment of their fundamental rights, as a result of acts or omissions constituting gross violations of international human rights law or serious violations of international humanitarian law. Where applicable and in accordance with domestic law, victims also include close family members or dependents of the direct victim and persons who, in intervening to assist victims in critical situations or to prevent victimization, have suffered harm."*

23. That, as a State-party to these binding international instruments, the State of Cameroon is **IMPERATIVELY** required to respect the rights contained therein and to exercise due diligence to prevent and punish violations of these rights committed by State representatives or non-State agents;

24. That it is clearly established without ambiguity that the responsibility for these facts is thus attributed to the State of Cameroon by virtue of International law, under the terms of article 4 and following of resolution 56/83 of the UN General Assembly dated December 12, 2001, on the responsibility of the State for INTERNATIONAL WRONGFUL ACTS".

IN VIEW OF ALL THE ABOVE, THE COALITION:

1. Expresses, in very strong terms, its boundless indignation at this shameful and complacent verdict, which runs counter to the fundamental principles of human rights;

2. Deeply regrets that the judges in charge of this case did not live up to their oath and human dignity;

3. Demands, in strong terms, a review of this unjust and shameful judgment by the judges, with a sense of honor for human dignity and with less pressure, of the Yaoundé Court of Appeal to effectively grant adequate compensation to the victims and their beneficiaries in accordance with the international commitments of the State of Cameroon ;

4. Reminds, with determination, the State of Cameroon that it is bound, by all legal means, to protect the civilian population ;

4. Strongly recommends that the Cameroonian Government scrupulously comply with its international commitments with a view to the effective protection of fundamental human rights, which are violated daily with the culture of impunity ;

5. Finally Reminds the parties to the conflict (government forces and armed separatist groups) that they are bound by International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and **MUST** be brought to book for the massacres of civilian populations.

Done at Yaoundé, on February 23, 2026,

By the Coalition of Civil Society-Human Rights Association for Peace in the Anglophone Regions and other affected Regions

For the Coalition

Have signed:

The National Coalition Coordinator

Mr. NFORMI Willam NGENGE (Volunteers for the Consolidation of National Unity)

The Permanent Secretary of the Coalition

Ms. Cyrille Rolande BECHON (Nouveaux Droits de l'Homme Cameroun)

Names of identified victims :

- 1) **SEKA ASANA**, 36 YEARS
- 2) **SEKA YASMINATU**, 17 YEARS
- 3) **SEKA ALIMIA**, 7YEARS
- 4) **SEKA AMSA**, 9YEARS
- 5) **SEKA JULIATU**, 3YEARS
- 6) **SEKA YASMINE**, 5YEARS
- 7) **KWIYERI GLADYS**
- 8) **JANET YAA**, 33YEARS
- 9) **SHEY DIANA**, 15YEARS
- 10) **SHEY MIDIAN**, 12YEARS
- 11) **SHEY JUDE**, 7 YEARS
- 12) **SHEY TRACY**, 5 YEARS
- 13) **SHEY CYNTHIAN**, 6 YEARS
- 14) **SHEY MARY ANGEL**, 3 YEARS
- 15) **SHEY BIRINYUY**, 5 MONTHS
- 16) **SUNJO ABDOUL**, 69 YEARS
- 17) **MRS YUSIFA** (PREGNANT WOMAN)
- 19) **BAH ALIDU**, 78 YEARS
- 20) **BAH KUNYUY**, 57 YEARS
- 21) **NGONG HASSANA** (PREGNANT WOMAN)
- 22) **NGONG ANABEL**



Names of injured persons :

- 1) **SEKA NGON** (PREGNANT)
- 2) **FAI JUDTINE**, 19 YEARS
- 3) **SHEY RINIWIR**, 34 YEARS
- 4) **SEKA USENI**
- 5) **SEKA GAMBO**
- 6) **SEKA SAKIRA**



Mass grave in Ngarbuh

Coalition-HR-NW/SW

