

BAMENDA PROVINCIAL EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE [BAPEC]

**THE SECRETARIAT
ARCHBISHOP'S HOUSE
P.O. BOX 82, BAMENDA
NORTH WEST REGION
CAMEROON**

**PROPOSALS FROM THE BISHOPS OF THE BAMENDA PROVINCIAL
EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE FOR THE NATIONAL DIALOGUE 2019**

Your Excellency,
Chief Dr. Joseph Dion Ngute,
Prime Minister and Head of Government,

We, the Bishops of the Ecclesiastical Province of Bamenda, which is coterminous with the North West and South West Regions, appreciate your invitation to table our proposals for the dialogue that the Head of State has called in view of a lasting solution to the ongoing Anglophone Crisis. We are happy that the long-awaited dialogue, which we have requested directly in our Memorandum to the Head of State and made allusion to in all our seven messages in the context of the Anglophone Crisis (copies enclosed), has finally been convened.

In order that this dialogue might not be a missed opportunity, our proposals will be made under four headings, namely: the Prerequisites for Dialogue, Participants in the Dialogue, Method of Representation and the Content of the Dialogue.

A. The Prerequisites for Dialogue

1. Respect for the truth, sincerity, honesty, openness and frankness:
 - a) On 1 October 1961, two territories united to form a new country and state called the "Federal Republic of Cameroon". These territories were "*La République du Cameroun*" (colonized by France) and the "Southern Cameroons" (colonized by Britain). Today, the country is known as "*La République du Cameroun*", no more "Federal Republic of Cameroon". "Southern Cameroons" has disappeared and is now known as the N.W. and S.W. Regions. The people of these two Regions (formerly Southern Cameroons) feel that they have been annexed and they now vehemently reject it and so think that the National

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Territory of Cameroon should revert the appellation and respect the Agreement of 1961.

b) This change of appellation and related decisions and policies for the past five and more decades have generated in the people of the N.W. and S.W. Regions a deep sense of the weight of domination, marginalization, subjugation and assimilation in their own territory.

c) The heart of the Anglophone Problem lies in the fact that, in violation of the terms of the federal union agreed between the Southern Cameroons (now N.W. and S.W. Regions) and *La République du Cameroun* and as laid down in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Cameroon of 1 October 1961, successive regimes in Yaoundé have manipulatively, for the past years, violated the agreement and dismantled or destroyed institutions, practices, procedures, way of being or living and doing, or in general, way of governance in the former Southern Cameroons in all spheres – political, administrative, economic, social, cultural, legal, educational, etc. – and have replaced them with those practiced in the territory of the former *République du Cameroun*. The Dialogue should therefore address all these spheres, especially:

- i. The Form of the State;
- ii. The Administrative System;
- iii. The Legal System; and
- iv. The Educational System.

The ongoing “Anglophone Crisis” is a response to the state of affairs that Anglophones are no longer willing to endure. Until the Authority in Yaoundé or the President and his Cabinet acknowledge this and act upon it accordingly, without using force, the “Anglophone Problem” will never be properly solved.

2. If the dialogue has to be fruitful or successful and to lead to an eventual lasting solution, there should be a ceasefire on both sides; all those detained and imprisoned as a result of the Anglophone Crisis should be released; and a general amnesty granted to Anglophones in the Diaspora to freely participate in the dialogue.

3. From the experience of the manipulation in the past, the Anglophones would not trust the genuineness of the dialogue if it is not moderated by a neutral body, preferably, an international body.

4. Britain, France and the U.N. should play a participatory role, since they, having conditioned a self-determined territory to unite with another in order to gain independence, are not free from the root causes of the Anglophone Problem.

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5. An agreement should be reached on the place of dialogue, preferably a neutral place for the safety of the Anglophone Leaders and some of those in the Diaspora.

B. Participants in the Dialogue

1. The dialogue should include all the protagonists of the Anglophone Problem in and out of Cameroon: The Cameroon Government and the Ambazonian Leaders in Cameroon and in the Diaspora.
2. Political Leaders.
3. Traditional Leaders.
4. Religious Leaders.
5. The United Nations.
6. The United States of America.
7. The British Commonwealth.
8. The United Kingdom.
9. France.
10. Germany, Switzerland, etc.

C. Method of Representation

1. Each group should choose its representative(s).
2. There should be special and neutral invited persons.

D. The Content of the Dialogue

1. There should be no taboo questions.
2. Although the President has called a national dialogue, this has been occasioned by the Anglophone Crisis. We are therefore primarily out to solve the Anglophone Problem and not the Cameroonian Problem. National problems should not distract us from the urgency to solve the Anglophone Problem.
3. The form of the State should be foremost on the agenda. Popular opinion points to at least a return to the 1961 Constitution with a Two-State Federation. The terms of unity must be re-discussed.
4. Anglophones are generally unhappy with the continuous colonisation of the country by France.
5. There must be a Commission for Truth and Reconciliation, where atrocities committed must be confessed and justice and reconciliation done.

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It is our ardent hope that a neutral body will be engaged to facilitate the dialogue, so that we may respect all the rules and have the best results possible. Thank you.

Done in Bamenda,
Wednesday, 25 September 2019.

For the Bishops of BAPEC


+ George NKUO

Bishop of Kumbo and President of BAPEC

