

# Conflict Resolution Strategies for the Cameroon Anglophone Crisis: A Community Research Proposal

**DIVINE TUMASANG LANGE**  
 DOCTORATE STUDENT  
 ID: UD51069BPR60025  
 ATLANTIC INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

**Abstract:-** Cameroon had been on the development path since its liberation from colonialism, 1961. Freedom without development and democracy, however, is not genuine freedom. Cameroon people and their governments had not really had their freedom to choose their developmental path. Cameroon today is under a civil Anglophone crisis spanning over two years and still no appropriate solution have been sorted from the look of the state of this crisis.

Choice	Votes	%
For	3,177,846	99.99
Against	176	0.01
Invalid/Blank Votes	1,612	
Total	3,179,634	100
Total Registered Votes	3,236,280	98.2

Table 1

According to the United Nations, some 40,000 Southern Cameroonians have fled the wave of terror and killings from their ancestral home to Nigeria. The UN again noted recently that some 160,000 Southern Cameroonians have been internally displaced and badly in need of food, shelter and medicine, noting that due to this crisis, approximately 1,600 Anglophone southern Cameroon resident and over 400 government and military officers have been recorded death. (Cameroon Intelligent Report, June, 8 2018)

This research paper is goal at sourcing the root cause of this crisis from all ends and presenting strategies to aggressively arrest this violence and holistically tam responsibility to all activist; the civil population, the Ambazonian Interim Government and its Self-Defense Council Restoration Forces, the government of the United Republic of Cameroon and the French legislative colonial government in- charge of oversea colonial territories.

## I. INTRODUCTION: ROOT OF CAMEROON’S CIVIL CRISIS

The Cameroonian civil crisis arose in the early days back on October 1, 1961 through the Southern Cameroon plebiscite that finally was concredited on May 20, 1972, with the goal of creating a unitary state and increase the power of the president who then was President **Ahmadou Babatoura Ahidjo**. This was successful in the referendum conference on May 20, 1972 with record of the following statistics (African Elections Database, 2004) leaving behind a minority opposition leadership team of 0.01% that in several occasions and to date is striving for cessation of the referendum. The statistics to this recorded the following;

From two different colonial masters with two different colonial policies as stated below;

- The British Southern Cameroon by British authority required a form of governance with which the Cameroonians would comply willingly, rather than coercively. This imperatively led to the indigenization of the colonial state through the adoption of the system of indirect rule. The post-colonial state, too, embraced indirect rule, although in a modified form. A corollary of this process of colonial and post-colonial state construction has been a redefinition of power relations at state level ( *Lugard, Frederick J. Dealtry, Baron;1922*) It also had significant repercussions at the material level. This system of governance of indirect rule focused in the North and South West Provinces, now regions of Cameroon. The present analysis adopts a multidisciplinary approach focusing on questions of political economy.
- The French Assimilation concept of East Cameroon among other African countries was based on the idea of spreading French culture to the colonies outside France in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century. Natives of these colonies were considered French citizens as long as the culture and customs were adopted. This also meant they would have the rights and duties of French citizens.

The meaning of assimilation has been greatly debated. One possible definition stated that French laws apply to all colonies outside France regardless of the distance from France, the size of the colony, the organization of society, the economic development, race or religious beliefs (Deschamps, Hubert, 1971). A cultural definition for assimilation can be the expansion of the French culture outside Europe.

This underlying policy was to enable France implant French culture and civilization on the people with the intention of smothering the cultures and fundamentality of Africans. The policy of Assimilation is strategically divided into three folds ranging; political, economic and socio-cultural.

#### A. *Political Assimilation*

The political administration of assimilation which was controlled from a centralized federation as the Federation of French West Africa had its headquarters at Dakar, Senegal. The laws for the administration, that is, excruciating were made in France under the very watchful eyes of the legislative body in France, keeping France and French citizens as the colonial minister, the governor-general, lieutenant-governors, the commandant of divisions, chief of subdivisions and the African chiefs heading cantons.

#### B. *Economic Assimilation*

French policy of Assimilation took a different trend in the economic sphere. In the Economic sphere, the colony was made to produce raw materials particularly to feed French industries. Based on this, French interest was the premium. The natural resources were exploited to enable France compete favorably in the league of industrial competition taking place in Europe. This French Colonial Pact, made it possible for France to influence the economic and financial decisions of the colonies.

#### C. *Cultural and Social Assimilation*

Another policy of Assimilation is that of the socio-cultural assimilation. The cultural assimilation was solely meant to implant French culture on the local people thus changing the cultural heritage of the local people. French civilization meant that, everything about Africa was fierce and unreasonable, and that it beholds on the local people to accept and uphold their claim of the French culture being divinely-ordained.

#### D. *The General Effects*

Today, about fourteen (14) West African countries after several years, say 50 years of independence from France still pay colonial 'benefits' to France. These countries are made to pay annual financial contributions over billions of Dollars to France because they are deemed by France to have benefited from them as a result of France colonizing them.

In terms of trade, major trading partner of all French West African countries is France and no one else. The failure to trade first with France means the worst is yet to happen. The critical challenge today is that the Cameroonian people haven't yet discovered the root cause of all the uprising problems. Neither the government nor the Cameroonian people are wicked to one another. But the case stands that the unification process was not appropriately considered to take effect of the two Cameroons with their two colonial masters with differing colonial policies. A critical look for

consideration had to be taken in to account to blend the two cultures inherited from the colonial policies adopted.

## II. GENERAL ANALYSIS: A CRITICAL LOOK IN TO THE CRISIS

A critical look in to this crisis and the probable solution stems in the analysis through the various phases and stages of colonization, independence without appropriate dignitaries in her phases ends up in crisis like what is been experienced presently in Cameroon and many other African countries. Many theoretical, political and socio-cultural debates had and are still on the hid today challenging and justifying the reasonable cause of Africa's low developmental trend, and many of these debates concluded in that the Africa people and their leaders had always been bias, full of greed and unwilling to work for the development of their continent. Through this research, it has not been proven right, but have urged that Africa's relative poverty, low and slow developmental trend at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was primarily the result of the form taken by European colonialism on the continent. It is urged that the Europeans settlements was for extraction rather than settling for philanthropy and development, which was accompanied by the establishment of independent institutions of regulatory nature, that indirectly served the economic development of Europe and its colonies in North American and Australia.

The main focus of colonization in to Africa had been appropriated by the Europeans for land and cheap labour for their settlers and plantations, not only this, the local nationalist were required through their marginalized collaborative relationships to serve their labour at very menial financial compensation, thus paralyzing their potentials of keeping control over their land. To keep balance in driving a self-sustained political, economic and socio-cultural growth between colonial masters and the colonies, colonial development and independence was to be broken down in to three (03) phases, of which each phase owed responsibilities in both sides for a balance growth. These are; the pre-colonial, the colonial and the post-colonial phases.

#### A. *The Pre-Colonial Legacies in Africa*

Research findings have shown that colonial legacies took its grounds in most of Sub-Saharan African countries during the European "Scramble", from 1879 to around 1905. During this period, the regions were characterized by an abundance of cultivable land in relation to the labour available to till it. This did not mean "resource abundance" as much of Africa's mineral endowment was either unknown or inaccessible with pre-industrial technology or was not yet valuable even overseas. For example, many of the major discoveries notably of oil in Nigeria and diamonds in Botswana were to occur only during the period of decolonization (Stuti K., July 24, 2001). Moreover, the fertility of much of the land was relatively low or at least

fragile, making it costly or difficult to pursue intensive cultivation, especially in the absence of animal manure.

This period was to be pre-dominantly characterized by mass discoveries of the natural resources available within the territories invaded. The embedded mineral resources and the necessary industrial technologies were to be on discoveries to promulgate the exploration of the resources.

#### B. *The Colonial Legacies in Africa*

During this period, treaties and deals were entered into by both the Europeans and Africans with the interest of benefits though unequal in ties. The period was to be characterized by the foreign elites on one hand structuring the legislative policies of governance to govern their dealings and operations in the colonies and on the other hand, the African elites postulating education, to enable their being integrated in strategic phases of the system operations.

#### C. *The Post-Colonial Legacies in Africa*

During this period, probably announced in the 1930s, development was the language of the Europeans in Africa which came about through decolonization and independence. Here, the Europeans embarked in heavy investments in keeping their regulatory structures and business entities to keep legacies. The British on their focus mediated through the indirect rule with strong ties of allegiance from the chiefs and the French through the doctrine of assimilation, as they subjected a minority of African as French nationalist to lead their colonial governments.

At this phase, the foreign elites withdrew physically from the colonial administration, while restructuring their legislative policies over their subject territories as the case of the British administration setting up a Marketing Board in their colonial territories and the French administration setting up a centralized Federation of French West Africa with headquarters at Dakar, Senegal.

The local elites on the other hand to keep a good balance were/are to for a majority focus in entrepreneurial engagement, to drive out control of cultivable land, cash crop cultivation and merchandising, industrialization and technological advancements from the monopolized control of the colonial elites.

### III. CAUSES OF CAMEROON'S CIVIL INSTABILITY

In Cameroon, there have been outbursts in protests by the English speaking minority against the dominance of the francophone majority. Understanding the country's colonial past helps explain the depth of this opposition. There were also differences between the two new colonial powers themselves. "The British colonial system that is the indirect rule, the French system; the direct rule, which seemingly is rigid and more rigorous than those of the English colonial system By the time independence arrived for British

Cameroons and French Cameroon in 1961, the French territory was more economically developed than its British counterpart. Two unequal former colonies became a single federal state; the disparities between the two were not addressed.

Anglophone Cameroonians felt they were politically and economically at a disadvantage, and the tensions with their francophone compatriots rose during the 1990s. This tension was not a direct consequence of the imbalance in the political and economic spheres but as a result of the ignorance and imbalance in the pre-colonial, precisely colonial and post-colonial works of the colonial masters and the colonies under colonial rules. This problem is however in borne, why? Because the French colonial overseas government appropriately took concern of all the phases of the colonial process while on the other side, the Cameroon government and her people ignorantly did not take concern of their roles partially with a slide exception of the English speaking Cameroons.

In this, look at the consequences of this imbalance;

The French colonial advanced structures in a system of under-development in terms of colonial drive have caused the following;

#### A. *In the Political Domain*

With their structure well rooted and codified in place, the French government seems every inflexible and selfish in the exploitation of the natural resources at the detriment of Cameroonians making them wallow in the abyss of poverty and agonies. This has however, weakened the political authority, military, ruler ship and divine authority of the leaderships who are made to become dummies and robots against which the English speaking Cameroon elites are opposing.

#### B. *In the Economic Domain*

French Colonial Pact in a well-entrenched and codified structure seemingly is proving, making it possible for France to dictate the economic and financial decisions of Cameroon and other colonies of France in the same state as Cameroon to favour or serve the interest of France and her citizens at the expense of the colonies. It now proofs that the colonial pact also prohibited French colonies to engage in any foreign trade with the exception of France.

#### C. *In the Social and cultural Domain*

The social assimilation policy in the ethic land of Cameroon in its state has gradually instituted a dehumanizing effect to Cameroonians as the social ordinances or abhorrent laws are now subjecting indigents to labour with practically menial monetary payments.

The cultural assimilation policy meant to implant French culture on the local people, have distorted the cultural heritage of the local people, making it looks like everything

about Cameroon is barbaric and ungodly, thus making Cameroonian to lose their hereditary culture of hospitality.

#### *D. In the Governmental Administrative Domain:*

The many incurable problems and unjustified accusations by the Cameroonian citizens against the government stems from the system of law and governance made by the interim French government in charge for their overseas colonies. Today, majority of the government and administrative policies in Cameroon are not effectively the works and decisions of the state government, thereby making the state government a figurehead in influencing decisions. It is today not in the absolute power of the state government to influence the conflict resolution strategies of the Anglophone crisis.

#### *E. In the Domain of the Civil Population:*

Due to the ignorance or irresponsibility of the civil population vis-a-vis their colonial obligations, have lost total control over their territorial land and totally dependent on paid employment thus very detrimental to increasing standards of living, the root cause of the alarming high rate of poverty despite the large deposits of natural resources is stemmed on employment dependency.

### **IV. SIMILAR CRISIS SITUATIONS TO OTHER NATIONS**

For authenticity, the review of this article must extend to look at the relative effects of colonial rule beyond Cameroon to other nations, its continental effects, precisely to the African continent has been a common talk seemingly alike to many nations. Its impact has generally been felt in either or all of the following; political, economic and socio-cultural, all going to either boom or slump developmental trends.

The differential impact of French and British rule shall be explored, and our judgment shall be drawn in scaling differential evolution of poverty, welfare and structural change between the colonial masters and their colonies. Out of the scope of Cameroon, are the Central African Economic and Monetary Union (CAEMU-CEMAC) countries under the same colonial direct rule (assimilation) of France (French) as Cameroon; the CEMAC is constituted of Cameroon, Gabon, Congo, Chad, Central Africa Republic and Equatorial Guinée. The system of colonial regulatory policy instituted is well structured in such that it achieves its political, economic and socio-cultural goals. This system is constituted hosting two organs;

- Economic Union of Central Africa (EUCA-UEAC)
- Monetary Union of Central Africa (MUCA-UMAC)

These Unions actually integrate several institutions that specialize in regulating the various sectors in the economy within the Central Africa zone.

- UEAC Integrates;
  - Inter-State Institute of Customs (L'EIED)
  - Regional School of Applied Technology and Project Evaluation (L'ISTA)
  - Regional School of Statistics and Applied Economics (L'ISSEA)
  - Central African States Development Bank (BDEAC)
- UMAC Integrates;
  - Central African States Central Bank (BEAC).
  - Central African States Banking Commission (COBAC).

These structures being in place; instituted and administered by France; the colonial master, embeds the platforms through which their political, economic and socio-cultural goals are achieved. All these above mentioned CEMAC countries do face the same crisis of political economic and socio-cultural challenges and poverty as Cameroon with slide discrepancies. Nigeria and Ghana on the other side also through their colonial and independence were under the indirect rule of England. Responsibilities were assumed by both parties; the colonial masters and the colonies, although at the end there is always a forceful need to seize rights at independence. Today, Nigeria and Ghana have absolute control over their political, economic and socio-cultural systems in terms of choosing their political, economic and socio-cultural path.

South Africa on their path of independence under the Irish colonial master was of the same experience as in Ghana and Nigeria and through the apartheid pursuit, was their course of independence and through the decades long developmental path, South Africa is qualified an utmost developed nation in a developing continent.

### **V. GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS: THE WAY OUT**

The political, economic and socio-cultural systems, which came into existence after the referendum in 1972, has generally worked satisfactorily in favor to the interest of those who put it in place, taking concerns of its dynamics, that should have been altering substantially through years past. Today there is much debate and doubts about its future. There is a general consensus that the Cameroon system does not work in favor to the nation and citizens' interest, and the question for Commonwealth, political entities, economic and financial entities, social and state governments is what should be done to enhance its performance, reputation and to arrest the crisis. The critical issue is to identify its strengths and weaknesses; building on the weaknesses and asks: where does the system go from here?

However, there is substantial lack of discussion around whether the current practice of governance will achieve the desired objective of delivering a better welfare to the nation's

interest and citizens first, and then that of their colonial collaborators. A real issue at stake, which has not received much attention to date and still not visible in the eyes of many, is how effectively do the different tiers in the political, economic and socio-cultural systems with France after independence functions to influence the governmental decisions and the use of the existing resources to perform their functions.

To effectively resolve this crisis, and to keep a balance of interest, none should assume it is as a result of the irresponsibility or ego of another that has caused the present crisis but the contributory witnesses of all. Just through such ideology can an atmosphere of dialog be created to analyze and sort possible solutions to the crisis.

#### A. *To the French Colonial Interim Government in Charge of Overseas Colonies*

There is a great need to revise colonial operational policies to enable balance and freedom of political, economic and socio-cultural operations. Note should be taken that the root traces of the Anglophone colonial inheritance can never be totally erased and taking in consideration of the unitary nature of the nation, through intermarriages and territorial settlements, has become a national crisis and not just an Anglophone issue. Gradually this is becoming a revolution which if care not taken shall ignite the loss of French influence over its colonial territories.

#### B. *To the Government of United Republic of Cameroon*

The government of the United Republic of Cameroon should seek appropriate strategies to enter into dialog to see appeasing the nation's citizens precisely the Anglophone community and also dialoging intensely with the French Interim Government in charge of Overseas Colonies to liberalize their colonial policies to better advantage the colony to endorse political, economic and socio-cultural freedom which is still not envisaged.

#### C. *To the Ambazonian Interim Government and Defense and Restoration Force.*

Mindful of facts that we are in a democratic nation, wherein power and independence can never be grasped with the use of arms but through democracy. Mindful of the fact that the movement is already conceiving diverse focuses, as groups now are being created under the banner of the movement but with totally different focuses from its objectives, now becoming a threat to its indigenes rather than a source of rescue. Appropriate majors should however be taken not to lead the movement become a rebel rather than an activist group to awake the entire nation, not only the Anglophone Cameroon from the weaknesses of colonial and regulatory rules.

#### D. *To the Civil Population of the United Republic of Cameroon.*

No revolution of civil freedom has ever come through the reliance of the population to the government and regulatory organs. Entrepreneurship most especially in the primary and agricultural sector should be engaged and encouraged to gain control and influence of land; the most precious capital.

## VI. THE NEW PERSPECTIVE

Since 1972, the United Nations, and the federal governments of the two unitary states; English speaking and French speaking Cameroons have been committed to a shared agenda through the Transformative Change Accord to establish a new relationship based on mutual respect and recognition, and a development move of 46-year today have all been to lay plans to bridge the differences in political, economic and socio-cultural outcomes between the two Cameroons and their French Colonial regulatory policies, particularly in the areas of: independence, governance and regulation.

The new perspective focus in this research is to go back to the original referendum accord of 1972 of a **federal decentralized state** with a **unitary government** as oppose to this present troubling and crisis arrested **“federal” centralized state** with a **unitary government**. An appropriate dissemination and implementation of this federal decentralized state system, shall keep secure the interest of all involved; the French colonial government, the Federal government of Cameroon, the Ambazonian interest and the civil status of the citizens of Cameroon.

Out of this context without alternative appropriate solutions, it is evident with the present actions of opposition and remonstrance, France shall lose control entirely over its Cameroon's colonial territory, the Cameroon government shall remain a puppet, the civil war already and ever increasing shall never come to an end and poverty and misery shall ever be part of the life styles of the civil Cameroonian population.

## REFERENCES

- [1]. Calverton, Maryland: OCR Macro, (2005); Enquête Démographique et de Santé Cameroun; Institut National de la Statistique; Cameroun. Retrieved from: <http://www.measuredhs.com/pubs/pdf/FR163/00PagesPr%C3%A9liminaires00.pdf>.
- [2]. Cambridge University Press; (1997); The Anglophone Problem in Cameroon: The Journal of Modern African Studies, 35, 2 (1997), pp. 207-229; Cambridge University Press; United Kingdom.
- [3]. Chiabi Emmanuel; (1997); The Making of Modern Cameroon. Volume I. Lanham, MD; University Press of America, USA.

- [4]. Cornell S., Kalt J., (1998). Sovereignty and nation-building: The development challenge in Indian country today. Retrieved from <https://uclajournals.org/doi/abs/10.17953/aicr.22.3.lv45536553vn7j78>
- [5]. Department of Indian and Northern Affairs; (1996); The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples; Retrieved from <https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100014597/1100100014637>.
- [6]. Deschamps, Hubert; (1971); "French Colonial Policy in Tropical Africa Between the Two World Wars." In Prosser Giford and W.M. Roger Louis (eds). France and Britain in Africa; Retrieved from <https://trove.nla.gov.au/work/21186423?selectedversion=NBD54938>
- [7]. Economic Commission for Africa; (1999); Progress in Good Governance since the Social Summit; Subregional followup conference to the world summit for social development; Retrieved from <https://www.uneca.org/sites/default/files/uploaded-documents/CFSSD/CFSSD7/CFSSD-7-0037-OREFollow-up-on-implementation-of-the-outcome%20ofWSD.pdf>.
- [8]. Graham J., Amos B., & Plumptre T.; (2003); Principles for good governance in the 21<sup>st</sup> century; Retrieved from <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/UNPAN/UNPAN011842.pdf>.
- [9]. Hatt D.; (2004); Unpacking the concept of traditional authority: Do elders, headmen, chiefs, and kings matter in social and economic development? Volume 1; Chieftain: The Journal of Traditional Governance; Nairobi-Kenya.
- [10]. Interim First Nations Health Authority; (2002); Navigating the Currents of Change; Retrieved from [http://www.fnha.ca/Documents/iFNHA\\_Consensus\\_Paper\\_2012.pdf](http://www.fnha.ca/Documents/iFNHA_Consensus_Paper_2012.pdf).
- [11]. Lugard, Frederick J. D., Baron;(1922); The dual mandate in British tropical Africa by W. Blackwood and Sons; Retrieved from <https://archive.org/details/cu31924028741175/page/n8>
- [12]. Plumptre T., Graham, J. (1999). Governance and good governance: International and aboriginal perspectives; Retrieved from [https://iog.ca/docs/1999\\_December\\_govgoodgov.pdf](https://iog.ca/docs/1999_December_govgoodgov.pdf).
- [13]. Richard Missens (2008); Sovereignty, Good Governance and First Nations Human Resources: Capacity Challenges, Retrieved from [http://fngovernance.org/ncfng\\_research/richard\\_missens.pdf](http://fngovernance.org/ncfng_research/richard_missens.pdf)
- [14]. Scott B., (2006). The politics of the Australian federal system; Department of Parliamentary Services; Australia, 1 December 2006, no. 4, 2006–07, ISSN 1832-2883. Retrieved from <https://www.aph.gov.au/binaries/library/pubs/rb/2006-07/07rb04.pdf>
- [15]. Stoker G.; (1998, March); Governance as theory: Five propositions, International Social Science Journal volume 15 issue 155 (pp. 17-28); International Social Science Journal; Retrieved from <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/1468-2451.00106>
- [16]. Stuti K.; (July 24, 2001); The Role of States and Local Governments; Fiscal Federalism and Service Delivery in Nigeria; Retrieved from <https://studylib.net/doc/18414904/fiscal-federalism-and-service-delivery-in-nigeria>.
- [17]. United Nations Economic and Social Council; (2002); The critical role of Public administration and good governance in implementing the United Nations millennium declaration, Retrieved from <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/un/unpan003535.pdf>.