



## REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON : ARREST AND RELEASE OF DISABLED PERSONS IN YAOUNDE

### Douala-Yaounde: REDHAC Press Release N°019/30062022

Douala-Yaounde, June 27, 2022 : the Human Rights Defenders Network in Central Africa (REDHAC) remains concerned about the increase in arbitrary arrests and detentions of blind and visually impaired persons by the police in Yaounde.

#### The facts

On June 27, 2022, arbitrary arrest and detention, violence, and torture of blind and visually impaired persons who wanted to hold a peaceful sit-in in front of the offices of the Prime Minister's Office to denounce the deplorable conditions in which disabled persons in general and visually impaired persons in particular live.

These bullying were perpetrated by the elements of the police, who led them, manu militari, to the central police station No. 1 in Yaoundé before finding their release in the afternoon. It should be noted that during the violence suffered by this vulnerable social category, there were blows and wounds, as well as broken canes.

On June 29, 2022, even worse, these demonstrators were deported to the locality of Mbalmayo in the district of Nyong and Soo. All this is regrettable and condemnable.

These disabled people are demanding :

- ✓ massive recruitment in the Cameroonian public service;
- ✓ the creation of a special fund for the financing of micro-projects presented by disabled people
- ✓ the financing of projects and micro-projects presented by disabled people;
- ✓ the disability pension;
- ✓ The respect of the exemption of school and university fees for disabled children or those born to disabled parents in public institutions ;
- ✓ The application of positive discrimination in the admission exams to the major training schools in Cameroon, etc...

#### **Reminder**

In November 2021, the disabled people of Cameroon got together to create the collective of the blind and visually impaired indignant to express a number of claims to improve their living conditions and those of the disabled in general.



**From all the above,**

**The Human Rights Defenders Network in Central Africa (REDHAC) :**

- ✓ takes note of the release of the members of the collective of blind and visually impaired people;
- ✓ thanks all stakeholders who mobilized for this release ;
- ✓ protests against such violence, the consequences of which are inestimable for the members of the collective of the blind and visually impaired who remain invisible in certain priorities in Cameroon.

**To the Cameroonian authorities, the Human Rights Defenders Network in Central Africa (REDHAC) :**

- ✓ asks to take into consideration the grievances of the members of the collective of the blind and visually impaired;
- ✓ asks to respect the article 38 paragraph 2 of the law n°2010/002 of April 13, 2010 on the protection and promotion of the disabled person, which states: "With equal quality, the priority of recruitment is given to the disabled person;
- ✓ recalls that the freedom to demonstrate is enshrined and protected by international and regional legal instruments, as well as by the fundamental law.

**Also, REDHAC** recommends the establishment of a framework for consultation with members of the collective of the blind and visually impaired, including other types of disabilities.

**Finally, REDHAC**

Encourages the Cameroonian government to effectively protect Human Rights Defenders, by adopting a law on "Promotion and Protection of Human Rights Defenders", as proposed by REDHAC since 2018.

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