

**Ordre des Avocats au
Barreau du Cameroun**

COMMISSION DES DROITS DE
L'HOMME et des Libertés



**Cameroon Bar
Association**

HUMAN RIGHTS AND LIBERTIES
COMMISSION

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*The President of Human Rights
And Liberties Commission*

**DECLARATION OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE HUMAN
RIGHTS AND LIBERTIES COMMISSION, ON THE OCCASION OF THE
CELEBRATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE FIGHT AGAINST
VIOLENCE COMMITTED ON WOMEN, ON NOVEMBER 25TH, 2019.**

The international day for the fight against violence on women that we celebrate on November 25th 2019, gives us the opportunity to recall the dreadful number of women swimming in violence globally.

According to the report of the UNO, the number of women victims of violence are as follows:

- 54.54% of women are victims of physical violence;
- 50.24% of women are victims of economic violence;
- 24% of teenage girls have experienced breast ironing;
- 1.4 per cent of women have been victims of genital mutilation;
- 71% of the victims of human trafficking are women and girls, of which $\frac{3}{4}$ of them are being exploited sexually.

Barrister BISSOU Christian - Daniël
President of the Human Rights and
Liberties Commission

On November 25th, 1960, when the Dominican dictator Rafael Trujillo decided to kill the MIRABAL sisters with a machete, he was far from imagining that this day would be devoted to the fight against violence committed on women by the UNO, and that the MIRABAL sisters will become the symbol of this fight.

The 1993 Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women defines this violence as: "all acts of violence directed against the female sex and, causing or likely to cause sexual or psychological harm, or suffering to women". Including the threat of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty in public or private life ".

To be complete on this definition, it would obviously be closer to that of Prof. Lori Heise who, to emphasize the level of "conjugal control defines violence to includes: "any act of force or coercion seriously endangering the life, body, psychological integrity or freedom of women and, committed in the name of the perpetuation of male control and power ... "

Violence against women, whether sexual, cultural, physical, economic or marital, has one ideological concept and that is: *sexism*.

Which is simply a means to strengthen and maintain the subordination of women.

It's consequences on peace, which in simple terms is defined as the "peaceful coexistence of people". On health, on women's universal schooling and social integrity, the effects of violence are catastrophic. The end results of these consequences on women are mostly the loss of autonomy, fear, stagnation, stigmatization, guilt, shame, loneliness and of course, it definitely prevents women and girls the opportunity of social construction, and the realization of their fundamental rights.

Barrister BISSOU Christian - Daniel
President of the Human Rights and
Liberties Commission



The first response of «these prisoners of silence» according to the expression of *Laeticia Tonye Loe*, must come from these women themselves.

To fight against sexism and the culture of violence, it is necessary to quit from silence, fear and become yourself the first agent of change and promoter of this fight as were the MIRABAL sisters.

Yes, violence does not cease, an action is valid only when the victim refuses to be silent but decides to lodge a complaint.

According to the report of the Ministry of Justice on the Rule of Law in Cameroon, in the year 2017, 47 clinics for local legal assistance received 4351 female victims or survivors of violence. But only 309 cases resulted in legal proceedings.

In that same year (2017), according to the report on women and girls, 454,000 people urgently needed protection against violence.

Women are silent in fear, shame and social scrutiny, and most of them do not consider such acts of violence as a "duty of discipline" but as the right of the spouse who holds the "conjugal control and power ..."

No! No! And No! Women stand up.

The acceptance of violence by women must stop, and be treated out of silence and darkness.

Our entire society must stop the socialization of women's subjection to male authority. The conjugal control is an abomination.

Barrister BISSOU Christian - Daniël
President of the Human Rights and
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The National Action Plan of Resolution 1325 and Related Resolutions of the UN Security Council on "Women, Peace and Security" launched by Cameroon on November 15th , 2016 for the period 2018-2020, aimed at making Cameroonian women, the true agents of change;

The purpose was to translate into action the relevant provisions of the National and International Instruments through the protection of women before, during and after conflict.

Two years after its establishment, the results are hardly applicable, especially in the current socio-political situation in the country.

Yet only 21% of respondents have heard of Resolution 1325 and Related Resolutions in a country where more than 56% of women have experienced physical violence since the age of 15.

By so doing, we cannot help our wives and sisters to overcome the precarious situation in which they find themselves, without their effective and permanent participation; they must facilitate the process of the fight against violence.

The Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms of the Cameroon Bar Association, has set up a Special Committee for the fight against violence on women;

This Committee will be responsible for the legal representation of women and girls who are victims of violence, sensitization and popularization of all relevant instruments relating to gender-based violence, and especially the collection of evidence of said violence, listening and counseling.

Gender-based violence is ever-present, multifaceted and widespread over the 365 days of the year, to the extent that only this single day, November 25th does not seem sufficient to eradicate this social plaque.

Barrister BISSOU Christian - Daniel
President of the Human Rights and
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Ultimately, it is about a constant struggle in us and around us because. Once the violence has been revealed, we should urgently find Structures to shelter victims, strengthen their access to justice and to assist them effectively in their reintegration;

Think of a real reporting platform such as the Grand Danger Phone (TGD) in France which allows one-touch keypad to directly call for help in case of emergency;

Finally rethink our “*sexist legislation*” by criminalization of marital rape, the introduction of the protection order against aggressors, the creation of centers for victims of violence, and ... What about our famous Family Code on standby since 1997;

It is a difficult struggle, but it is an exalting and useful task, in keeping with the promises of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

Do not leave anyone behind.

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