



COI QUERY

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Title	Cameroon's Army conduct in Bamenda and Kumba (2018-2020)
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COI QUERY RESPONSE - Cameroon

Cameroon's Army conduct in Bamenda and Kumba (2018-2020)

Background information

In late 2016, English-speaking professionals in Cameroon protested dominance of French language in the country's educational and justice systems and demanded more autonomy, to which the government responded with repression.¹ These largely peaceful protests, dominated by lawyers, teachers, and students, were repressed by the government and 'hundreds' were arrested.² Human Rights Watch (HRW) indicated that 'significant segments of the Anglophone population' wanted either more autonomy or secession.³ Despite discussions between the government and the teachers' and lawyers' representatives in early 2017, the crisis continued and government arrested some of the Anglophone negotiators.⁴ On 1 October 2017 (1 October is the day when Southern Cameroon got its independence from Great Britain⁵), separatists proclaimed an independent Republic of Ambazonia⁶ in Anglophone Cameroon consisting of two regions, North-West (NW) and South-West (SW).⁷ Throughout 2017, separatist activists started imposing ban on education.⁸ Towards the end of 2017, radical voices among separatists became more prevalent.⁹ Some Anglophone groups started deploying 'armed struggle' and attacked soldiers, schools, as well as civilians.¹⁰ Various new armed separatist groups emerged, including the Ambazonian Defense Forces, the Southern Cameroon Defense Forces, the Ambazonia Restoration Army, and others^{11,12}

Government continued to suppress the protests and increased security operations, and during protests that took place on 1 October 2017 in various cities in NW and SW regions, including

¹ HRW, "These Killings Can Be Stopped", Government and Separatist Groups Abuses in Cameroon's Anglophone Regions, 19 July 2018, [url](#), p. 1

² Amnesty International, A turn for the worse: Violence and human rights violations in Anglophone Cameroon, 12 June 2018, [url](#), p. 5

³ HRW, "These Killings Can Be Stopped", Government and Separatist Groups Abuses in Cameroon's Anglophone Regions, 19 July 2018, [url](#), p. 1

⁴ HRW, "These Killings Can Be Stopped", Government and Separatist Groups Abuses in Cameroon's Anglophone Regions, 19 July 2018, [url](#), p. 1

⁵ Quartz, Cameroon is on edge after security forces opened fire on Anglophone protesters, 26 September 2017, [url](#)

⁶ Le Monde Diplomatique, Kameruns Bruchlinien, 18 December 2018, [url](#)

⁷ HRW, "These Killings Can Be Stopped", Government and Separatist Groups Abuses in Cameroon's Anglophone Regions, 19 July 2018, [url](#), pp. 1, 16, 17

⁸ HRW, "These Killings Can Be Stopped", Government and Separatist Groups Abuses in Cameroon's Anglophone Regions, 19 July 2018, [url](#), p. 1

⁹ Amnesty International, A turn for the worse: Violence and human rights violations in Anglophone Cameroon, 12 June 2018, [url](#), p. 5; HRW, "These Killings Can Be Stopped", Government and Separatist Groups Abuses in Cameroon's Anglophone Regions, 19 July 2018, [url](#), p. 2

¹⁰ Amnesty International, A turn for the worse: Violence and human rights violations in Anglophone Cameroon, 12 June 2018, [url](#), p. 10

¹¹ Collectively referred to in this query response as separatists.

¹² Africa Center for Strategic Studies, Growing Instability in Cameroon Raises Fundamental Questions about the State, 26 October 2018, [url](#)

Bamenda and Kumba, over 20 people were killed and 500 arrested.¹³ Following the protests, the authorities 'labeled all protesters as radical separatists' and deployed soldiers from the Rapid Intervention Battalion (RIB), 'the elite unit of the Cameroonian army known for its aggressive methods'¹⁴ that answers directly to the president.¹⁵ RIB reportedly responded with 'brutal retaliation, burning down entire villages and indiscriminately killing, arresting, and torturing dozens of people' in the Anglophone region.¹⁶ For example, on 1 December 2017, authorities in the Manyu division, in the SW region, informed the population of 15 villages in the area that they have to 'relocate to safer neighbourhoods of their choice in the hours that follow, failure of which they will be treated as accomplices or perpetrators of ongoing criminal occurrences registered on security and defence forces.'¹⁷ Following the release of the statement, that was taken down the following day, armed forces entered the villages and arrested people they found there.¹⁸

According to HRW, between January and April 2018, security forces allegedly killed more than a dozen civilians.¹⁹ HRW sources reported that villagers claimed that these assaults 'took place in retaliation for earlier attacks by separatist forces against security forces or because of rumors of separatist presence in the villages.'²⁰

One year later, on 1 October 2018, the authorities imposed various restrictions on gatherings, suspended public transportation and closed public spaces to prevent demonstrations.²¹

In a report covering 1 January 2018 to 9 February 2019, the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED) noted that even though the violence was reported throughout the Anglophone region, it occurred mainly in the regional capitals of Bamenda in the NW and Buea in the SW.²² In March 2019, HRW reported that security forces 'killed scores of civilians, used indiscriminate force, and torched hundreds of homes over the [previous] six months.'²³ In the Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2019, the US Department of State (USDOS) wrote that 'there were credible reports that members of government forces

¹³ Amnesty International, A turn for the worse: Violence and human rights violations in Anglophone Cameroon, 12 June 2018, [url](#), p. 11

¹⁴ Africa Center for Strategic Studies, Growing Instability in Cameroon Raises Fundamental Questions about the State, 26 October 2018, [url](#)

¹⁵ US, CIA Factbook - Cameroon, last updated 13 August 2024, [url](#)

¹⁶ Africa Center for Strategic Studies, Growing Instability in Cameroon Raises Fundamental Questions about the State, 26 October 2018, [url](#)

¹⁷ Amnesty International, A turn for the worse: Violence and human rights violations in Anglophone Cameroon, 12 June 2018, [url](#), p. 6

¹⁸ Amnesty International, A turn for the worse: Violence and human rights violations in Anglophone Cameroon, 12 June 2018, [url](#), p. 6

¹⁹ HRW, "These Killings Can Be Stopped", Government and Separatist Groups Abuses in Cameroon's Anglophone Regions, 19 July 2018, [url](#), p. 43

²⁰ HRW, "These Killings Can Be Stopped", Government and Separatist Groups Abuses in Cameroon's Anglophone Regions, 19 July 2018, [url](#), p. 43

²¹ Africa Center for Strategic Studies, Growing Instability in Cameroon Raises Fundamental Questions about the State, 26 October 2018, [url](#)

²² ACLED, Crackdowns, "Ghost-Towns," and Violence against Civilians in Anglophone Cameroon, 14 February 2019, [url](#)

²³ HRW, Cameroon: New Attacks on Civilians By Troops, Separatists, 28 March 2019, [url](#)

deliberately killed innocent citizens', including in the NW region.²⁴ In August 2019, separatists began enforcing lockdowns across NW and SW regions, and imposed a ban on schools.²⁵

In January 2020, Amnesty International further documented abuses by the army in villages in the NW and SW regions, including burning of houses and indiscriminate shooting.²⁶

1. Army's conduct in Bamenda in 2018-2020

1.1. Main operations and events in the period 2018-2019

Bamenda, the capital of the North-West region of Cameroon²⁷, located in the Mezam division²⁸, was one of the cities where the demonstrations of September-October 2017 took place²⁹, leaving over 500 civilians arrested and over 20 killed.³⁰ International Crisis Group reported that the use of force by the security forces during the demonstrations lead to at least 40 deaths and 100 injuries between 28 September and 2 October 2017.³¹ According to the same source, the acts by the security forces included disproportionate use of force, house raids, arbitrary arrests, torture, sexual violence, destruction, and looting.³²

According to a Cameroonian NGO, interviewed by the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) in August 2020, security forces in Bamenda "fire live ammunition, sometimes occupy houses at night ... for searches, carry out arbitrary arrests, [and] use excessive force in all circumstances against individuals" and Anglophone residents are "caught in the crossfire" of separatist and government forces.³³ By September 2018, several military checkpoints had been set up by the security forces in Bamenda.³⁴ As of October 2018, streets in the city were patrolled by the soldiers who reportedly demanded bribes from the locals to pass through the checkpoints.³⁵ In November 2018, the city was under a curfew from 9 pm to 9 am.³⁶

²⁴ USDOS, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2019 - Cameroon, 11 March 2020, [url](#)

²⁵ DW, A new surge of people leaving Cameroon's Anglophone regions, 27 August 2019, [url](#)

²⁶ AI, Cameroon: Rise in killings in Anglophone regions ahead of parliamentary elections, 6 February 2020, [url](#)

²⁷ HRW, "These Killings Can Be Stopped", Government and Separatist Groups Abuses in Cameroon's Anglophone Regions, 19 July 2018, [url](#), p. 12

²⁸ Cameroon Data Portal, Population and Housing Census, 8 July 2014, [url](#)

²⁹ Amnesty International, Cameroon: inmates 'packed like sardines' in overcrowded prisons following deadly Anglophone protests, 13 October 2017, [url](#); HRW, "These Killings Can Be Stopped", Government and Separatist Groups Abuses in Cameroon's Anglophone Regions, 19 July 2018, [url](#), p. 17

³⁰ Amnesty International, Cameroon: inmates 'packed like sardines' in overcrowded prisons following deadly Anglophone protests, 13 October 2017, [url](#).

³¹ International Crisis Group, Cameroon: A Worsening Anglophone Crisis Calls for Strong Measures: Crisis Group Africa Briefing, N°130, 19 October 2017, [url](#)

³² International Crisis Group, Cameroon: A Worsening Anglophone Crisis Calls for Strong Measures: Crisis Group Africa Briefing, N°130, 19 October 2017, [url](#)

³³ Canada, IRB, Cameroon: Situation of Anglophones, including returnees, in Bamenda, Yaoundé and Douala; treatment by society and by the authorities (2016-August 2018) [CMR106141.E], 24 August 2018, [url](#)

³⁴ Switzerland, SEM, Note Cameroun; Crise du Cameroun anglophone, 25 September 2018, [url](#), p. 4

³⁵ DW, Cameroon's 'senseless spiral of violence', 20 October 2018, [url](#)

³⁶ UNOCHA, Cameroon: North-West and South-West Crisis Situation Report No. 1 - As of 30th November, 2018, 30 November 2018, [url](#), p. 2

In August 2019, Deutsche Welle (DW) reported that residents of Bamenda were forced to flee their homes to escape violence from both security forces and armed separatists, seeking refuge in the surrounding bush.³⁷ In December 2019, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) indicated that some internally displaced persons (IDPs) started moving to Bamenda that was together with other urban areas seen as 'safer'.³⁸ In September 2020, according to UNOCHA, 11 civilians were killed by security forces in the SW region, including in Bamenda.³⁹

In March 2019, HRW reported that the government of Cameroon denied abuses documented and claimed that 'security forces all undergo human rights training prior to deployment' and there are some 30 cases at the Military Courts, including in Bamenda, 'for crimes including torture, destruction of property, violation of orders, and theft'.⁴⁰

1.2. Operation Bamenda clean in 2020

Following a killing of a police officer⁴¹, in September 2020, security forces launched the operation 'Bamenda clean'.⁴² 'Hundreds' of soldiers have been deployed in the city.⁴³ Alongside the launch of the operation, the authorities imposed a ban on motorbikes that were used by separatists, according to the government.⁴⁴ The separatists banned the use of all vehicles in response.⁴⁵

Although the initial idea behind the operation to fight crime and remove separatists from the city was at first seen as an attempt to stop violence, it has initially turned into 'nightmare' for civilians because of human rights abuses, according to the Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Africa (CHRDA).⁴⁶

³⁷ DW, A new surge of people leaving Cameroon's Anglophone regions, 27 August 2019, [url](#)

³⁸ UNOCHA, Cameroon: Massive population displacement, North West: Flash update (20 December 2019), 20 December 2019, [url](#)

³⁹ UNOCHA, Cameroon Situation Report, 2 November 2020, [url](#)

⁴⁰ HRW, Cameroon: New Attacks on Civilians By Troops, Separatists, 28 March 2019, [url](#)

⁴¹ RFI, Cameroun: la situation à Bamenda a «dégénéré», déplore le leader d'opposition John Fru Ndi, 12 September 2020, [url](#)

⁴² AA, Cameroon launch security operation in separatist region, 9 September 2020, [url](#); HRW, "They Are Destroying Our Future", Armed Separatist Attacks on Students, Teachers, and Schools in Cameroon's Anglophone Regions, 16 December 2021, [url](#); International Crisis Group, CrisisWatch, September 2020, [url](#)

⁴³ AA, Cameroun / Crise anglophone : un policier tué dans une embuscade à Bamenda [Cameroon / Anglophone crisis: a policeman killed in an ambush in Bamenda], 20 September 2020, [url](#); RFI, Cameroun: la situation à Bamenda a «dégénéré», déplore le leader d'opposition John Fru Ndi, 12 September 2020, [url](#)

⁴⁴ RFI, Cameroun: l'inquiétude reste vive à Bamenda après des tirs entre armée et séparatistes, 5 September 2020, [url](#); Pan African Visions, Cameroon's Anglophone Crisis: Casualties from Operation 'Bamenda Clean' continue to surface, 30 September 2020, [url](#)

⁴⁵ CNA, Soldiers, Police Extort Civilians In Operation Bamenda Clean, 8 September 2020, [url](#); Mimi Mefo Info, 'Bamenda Clean': One month after "bloody military" action, 7 October 2020, [url](#); RFI, Cameroun: l'inquiétude reste vive à Bamenda après des tirs entre armée et séparatistes, 5 September 2020, [url](#)

⁴⁶ CHRDA, CHRDA Human Rights Report Covering Acts Of Violence Committed By The Cameroon Military And Non-State Armed Groups Against Civilians In The North-West And South-West Regions Of Cameroon In The Period August And September 2020, 6 October 2020, [url](#)

According to sources, the abuses of the armed forces during the operation included indiscriminate arrests⁴⁷, illegal detention⁴⁸, shootings⁴⁹, killings⁵⁰, and rape.⁵¹ Furthermore, the soldiers conducted house searches⁵², looting⁵³, and extortion⁵⁴. Soldiers were reportedly searching houses and asking for receipts from electronic appliances such as refrigerators or gas cookers and if people failed to present them, they demanded money.⁵⁵

1.3. A list of documented incidents against civilians and perceived separatists in Bamenda in the period 2018-2020

- On 1 February 2018, ‘men dressed in civilian clothes but wearing military boots and believed to be security forces’ shot a man in Bamenda.⁵⁶
- In July 2018, a woman was raped by a soldier at a checkpoint in Bamenda.⁵⁷ He was on trial later the same year.⁵⁸
- A November 2018 article by BBC reported on a story of 4 boys shot dead by security forces in Bamenda for smoking marijuana, which they saw as a link to the separatists.⁵⁹

⁴⁷ International Crisis Group, CrisisWatch, September 2020, [url](#)

⁴⁸ Mimi Mefo Info, 'Bamenda Clean': One month after "bloody military" action, 7 October 2020, [url](#)

⁴⁹ International Crisis Group, CrisisWatch, September 2020, [url](#)

⁵⁰ CHRDA, CHRDA Human Rights Report Covering Acts Of Violence Committed By The Cameroon Military And Non-State Armed Groups Against Civilians In The North-West And South-West Regions Of Cameroon In The Period August And September 2020, 6 October 2020, [url](#); Mimi Mefo Info, 'Bamenda Clean': One month after "bloody military" action, 7 October 2020, [url](#); Pan African Visions, Cameroon's Anglophone Crisis: Casualties from Operation 'Bamenda Clean' continue to surface, 30 September 2020, [url](#)

⁵¹ CHRDA, CHRDA Human Rights Report Covering Acts Of Violence Committed By The Cameroon Military And Non-State Armed Groups Against Civilians In The North-West And South-West Regions Of Cameroon In The Period August And September 2020, 6 October 2020, [url](#)

⁵² CHRDA, CHRDA Human Rights Report Covering Acts Of Violence Committed By The Cameroon Military And Non-State Armed Groups Against Civilians In The North-West And South-West Regions Of Cameroon In The Period August And September 2020, 6 October 2020, [url](#); International Crisis Group, CrisisWatch, September 2020, [url](#); Pan African Visions, Cameroon's Anglophone Crisis: Casualties from Operation 'Bamenda Clean' continue to surface, 30 September 2020, [url](#)

⁵³ CHRDA, CHRDA Human Rights Report Covering Acts Of Violence Committed By The Cameroon Military And Non-State Armed Groups Against Civilians In The North-West And South-West Regions Of Cameroon In The Period August And September 2020, 6 October 2020, [url](#); FRI, Au Cameroun, l'opération militaire «Bamenda Propre» fait peur, 15 September 2020, [url](#)

⁵⁴ CNA, Soldiers, Police Extort Civilians In Operation Bamenda Clean, 8 September 2020, [url](#); CHRDA, CHRDA Human Rights Report Covering Acts Of Violence Committed By The Cameroon Military And Non-State Armed Groups Against Civilians In The North-West And South-West Regions Of Cameroon In The Period August And September 2020, 6 October 2020, [url](#); Mimi Mefo Info, 'Bamenda Clean': One month after "bloody military" action, 7 October 2020, [url](#)

⁵⁵ CHRDA, CHRDA Human Rights Report Covering Acts Of Violence Committed By The Cameroon Military And Non-State Armed Groups Against Civilians In The North-West And South-West Regions Of Cameroon In The Period August And September 2020, 6 October 2020, [url](#)

⁵⁶ HRW, "These Killings Can Be Stopped", Government and Separatist Groups Abuses in Cameroon's Anglophone Regions, 19 July 2018, [url](#), p. 37

⁵⁷ Equal Times, Women and children bear the brunt of Cameroon's conflict, 3 October 2018, [url](#); USDOS, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2018 - Cameroon, 13 March 2019, [url](#)

⁵⁸ Equal Times, Women and children bear the brunt of Cameroon's conflict, 3 October 2018, [url](#)

⁵⁹ BBC News, Cameroon conflict: 'We live in fear in Bamenda', 15 November 2018, [url](#)

- On 7 October 2018, soldiers entered a church in Bamenda and forced people to leave, claiming that they were enforcing a ban on gatherings.⁶⁰
- On 20 October 2018, DW reported that a soldier shot dead a priest in front of a church near Bamenda.⁶¹
- On 25 April 2019, soldiers responded to an alleged killing of a soldier by separatists by shooting in a commercial part of Bamenda, later breaking into shops.⁶²
- On 15 May 2019, soldiers from the Air Force and RIB attacked Mankon, in Bamenda, burning some 70 shops and homes and killing at least one person, in what was reportedly a response to a killing of two soldiers by the separatists earlier that day.⁶³ Among the burned buildings was a church.⁶⁴ On 16 May 2019, authorities opened an investigation into the destruction.⁶⁵ According to a HRW report covering 2019, no information about the results of the investigation was made public.⁶⁶
- On 10 July 2019, soldiers returned to the Mankon area of Bamenda, where the May 15 attack took place, and killed two men.⁶⁷
- On 20 October 2019, security forces arrested a priest and took him to an army base; the priest spoke before to the UN Security Council about human rights abuses by both security forces and separatists in the NW-SW regions; he was released the next day with no charges brought against him.⁶⁸
- On 19 February 2020, in the Mezam department of the Bamenda town, the military shot dead a suspected separatist near a hospital.⁶⁹
- In an article published on 4 September 2020, Radio France International (RFI) quoted Ayeah Chongsi, executive director of the NGO Chrapa, Center for Human Rights and Peace Advocacy, as saying that the security forces raided public spaces in the city and were shooting indiscriminately into the crowd, following an incident at which one policeman was killed and another kidnapped earlier on that day.⁷⁰
- In the period of 21-22 September 2020, CHRDA indicated that the army 'executed' five civilians in Bamenda.⁷¹
- On 12 September 2020, security forces killed three civilians.⁷²

⁶⁰ USDOS, 2018 Report on International Religious Freedom: Cameroon, 21 June 2019, [url](#)

⁶¹ DW, Cameroon's 'senseless spiral of violence', 20 October 2018, [url](#)

⁶² HRW, UN: Shine Spotlight on Brutality in Cameroon, 13 May 2019, [url](#)

⁶³ GCR2P, Atrocity Alert No. 156: Cameroon, Myanmar (Burma) and Central African Republic, 29 May 2019, [url](#)

⁶⁴ USDOS, 2019 Report on International Religious Freedom: Cameroon, 10 June 2020, [url](#)

⁶⁵ HRW, Cameroon: Promised Investigation Should Be Independent, 23 May 2019, [url](#)

⁶⁶ HRW, World Report 2020 - Cameroon, 14 January 2020, [url](#)

⁶⁷ HRW, World Report 2020 - Cameroon, 14 January 2020, [url](#)

⁶⁸ USDOS, 2019 Report on International Religious Freedom: Cameroon, 10 June 2020, [url](#)

⁶⁹ Insecurity Insight, Cameroon: Threats and Violence Against Civilians and Vital Civilian Facilities Bulletin 1: January-April 2020, 20 May 2020, [url](#)

⁷⁰ RFI, Cameroon: les civils de Bamenda victimes des combats entre séparatistes et forces de l'ordre, 4 September 2020, [url](#)

⁷¹ CHRDA, CHRDA Human Rights Report Covering Acts Of Violence Committed By The Cameroon Military And Non-State Armed Groups Against Civilians In The North-West And South-West Regions Of Cameroon In The Period August And September 2020, 6 October 2020, [url](#)

⁷² International Crisis Group, CrisisWatch, September 2020, [url](#)

- On 18 September 2020, two brothers were killed by security forces in Bamenda; one of the brothers had allegedly links to the separatists.⁷³
- On 22 September 2020, soldiers killed ‘four people including two suspected separatists.’⁷⁴
- On 23 September 2020, Cameroon News Agency (CNA) reported that five civilians were killed by the armed forces in Bamenda for not giving them information on the separatists.⁷⁵
- In November 2020, two civilians were killed by soldiers in Akum near Bamenda.⁷⁶

2. Army’s conduct in Kumba in 2018-2020

2.1. *Main operations and events in the period 2018-2020*

Kumba is a city located in the South-West region of Cameroon⁷⁷, in the Meme division.⁷⁸ Kumba was one of the cities where the demonstrations of September-October 2017 took place⁷⁹, leaving over 500 civilians arrested and over 20 killed.⁸⁰ International Crisis Group reported that the use of force during the demonstrations by the security forces lead to at least 40 deaths and 100 injuries between 28 September and 2 October 2017.⁸¹ According to the same source, the acts by the security forces included disproportionate use of force, house raids, arbitrary arrests, torture, sexual violence, destruction, and looting.⁸²

Among others, in the SW region, security forces have been accused of destruction of homes.⁸³ For example, the village of Kwakwa, in the Meme division, was burned to the ground in December 2017 in an alleged retaliation for killing of two gendarmes by separatists.⁸⁴ HRW reported that ‘security forces returned to Kwakwa on January 18 [2018] and burned hundreds of houses and killed at least seven civilians.’⁸⁵ The damage was done ‘to destroy the property

⁷³ CNA, [Twitter], posted on: 18 September 2020, [url](#)

⁷⁴ International Crisis Group, CrisisWatch, September 2020, [url](#)

⁷⁵ CNA, NWSW region: Gov’t Forces Kill 11 Civilians In 24 Hours, 23 September 2020, [url](#)

⁷⁶ International Crisis Group, CrisisWatch, Cameroon, January 2018 - December 2020, [url](#)

⁷⁷ HRW, “These Killings Can Be Stopped”, Government and Separatist Groups Abuses in Cameroon’s Anglophone Regions, 19 July 2018, [url](#)

⁷⁸ Cameroon Data Portal, Population and Housing Census, 8 July 2014, [url](#)

⁷⁹ HRW, “These Killings Can Be Stopped”, Government and Separatist Groups Abuses in Cameroon’s Anglophone Regions, 19 July 2018, [url](#)

⁸⁰ Amnesty International, Cameroon: inmates ‘packed like sardines’ in overcrowded prisons following deadly Anglophone protests, 13 October 2017, [url](#).

⁸¹ International Crisis Group, Cameroon: A Worsening Anglophone Crisis Calls for Strong Measures: Crisis Group Africa Briefing, N°130, 19 October 2017, [url](#)

⁸² International Crisis Group, Cameroon: A Worsening Anglophone Crisis Calls for Strong Measures: Crisis Group Africa Briefing, N°130, 19 October 2017, [url](#)

⁸³ HRW, “These Killings Can Be Stopped”, Government and Separatist Groups Abuses in Cameroon’s Anglophone Regions, 19 July 2018, [url](#), p. 46

⁸⁴ Amnesty International: A turn for the worse: Violence and human rights violations in Anglophone Cameroon, 12 June 2018, [url](#), pp. 6, 25

⁸⁵ HRW, “These Killings Can Be Stopped”, Government and Separatist Groups Abuses in Cameroon’s Anglophone Regions, 19 July 2018, [url](#), p. 46

of separatist leaders and punish villages suspected of supporting secession.⁸⁶ According to a report released by HRW in July 2018, based on interviews with people in Kumba, ‘in most cases, villagers said that the attacks took place in retaliation for earlier attacks by separatist forces against security forces or because of rumors of separatist presence in the villages. In all cases, the bulk of the population fled to the bush when the security forces arrived.’⁸⁷

In November 2018, UNOCHA confirmed that security forces continued with their operations against the separatists, ‘including on the Kumba-Mbonge axis in vicinity of Kumba.’⁸⁸ Clashes between security forces and separatists occurred in August 2019.⁸⁹ In the same month, DW reported that that people fled their homes in Kumba due to violence and hid in the bush.⁹⁰ Between 1-7 September 2019, four separatists were killed during another clashes with security forces.⁹¹

2.2. A list of documented incidents against civilians and perceived separatists in Kumba in 2018-2020

- On 6 August 2018, Franklin Mowha, an activist and president of the NGO Frontline Fighters for Citizen Interests went on a mission to Kumba to document human rights abuses and had gone missing.⁹² According to the vice president of the NGO, ‘authorities had previously targeted Mowha on several occasions because of his human rights reporting.’⁹³
- Between January and June 2018, following an assessment of 131 villages in the region, 20 villages and towns in the SW, including Kumba, were affected by destruction of buildings, according to a HRW report.⁹⁴ The same source reported that the destruction continued as of June 2018.⁹⁵
- On 20 August 2020, while searching for separatists in Ikiliwindi, near Kumba, security forces shot dead two men.⁹⁶
- On 24 October 2020, armed men entered the Mother Francisca International Bilingual Academy in Kumba, killing eight children and injuring 13⁹⁷. No one claimed the responsibility for the attack and while security forces claimed that separatists were

⁸⁶ International Crisis Group, Cameroon’s Anglophone Crisis: How to Get to Talks?, 2 May 2019, [url](#), p. 1

⁸⁷ HRW, “These Killings Can Be Stopped”, Government and Separatist Groups Abuses in Cameroon’s Anglophone Regions, 19 July 2018, [url](#), p. 43

⁸⁸ UNOCHA, Cameroon: North-West and South-West Crisis Situation Report No. 1 - As of 30th November 2018, 30 November 2018, [url](#), p. 2

⁸⁹ International Crisis Group, CrisisWatch, Cameroon, January 2018 - December 2019, [url](#)

⁹⁰ DW, A new surge of people leaving Cameroon’s Anglophone regions, 27 August 2019, [url](#)

⁹¹ International Crisis Group, CrisisWatch, Cameroon, January 2018 - December 2019, [url](#)

⁹² Amnesty International, Activist Missing For Over One Month, Urgent Action: 168/18, 13 September 2018, [url](#)

⁹³ USDOS, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2018 - Cameroon, 13 March 2019, [url](#)

⁹⁴ HRW, “These Killings Can Be Stopped” Government and Separatist Groups Abuses in Cameroon’s Anglophone Regions, 2018, [url](#), p. 43

⁹⁵ HRW, “These Killings Can Be Stopped” Government and Separatist Groups Abuses in Cameroon’s Anglophone Regions, 2018, [url](#), p. 43

⁹⁶ CHRDA, Human Rights Violations Committed By The Military Between May And August 2020 In The North-West (Nwr) And Southwest (Swr) Regions Of Cameroon, 31 August 2020, [url](#)

⁹⁷ DW, Cameroon school attack puts spotlight on conflict, 26 October 2020, [url](#)



behind it, separatists claimed that security forces did it.⁹⁸ Following the incident, authorities claimed that security forces killed two separatists involved in the school killings in two separate incidents, four days after the attack and in February 2021.⁹⁹ In October 2021, HRW reported that four people were sentenced to death for the attack in 'a trial marked by procedural irregularities.'¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ CHRDA, chrda report on human rights abuses committed by armed separatists in the North-West and South-West regions of Cameroon between March 2020 and March 2021, [2021], [url](#), p. 42; VOA, Cameroon Mourns 7 Children Killed at School, 31 October 2020, [url](#)

⁹⁹ HRW, Cameroon: Sham Trial for Kumba School Massacre, 22 October 2021, [url](#)

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