



To the Presidents of
All Political Parties and Civil Society
Organisations in Cameroon

In the month of August 2010

The SDF's Position on ELECAM

Dear President and Fellow Compatriot,

It is every Cameroonians inalienable right to vote and vote for the candidates that best represent their interest in an election that is transparent, credible and free of the malicious perpetrations that have characterized our past elections since 1992. It is this choice that sets the foundation for peace, prosperity, development and equal opportunity to all Cameroonians irrespective of gender, age, ethnicity or ideological preferences. It is this right to self determination that the Biya regime has deprived our citizenry through massive election rigging at every step of the process. As political leaders carrying with us the dreams, hopes and aspirations of our people, it will be a great betrayal of trust and trusteeship if we continue to legitimize the arbitrary and brutal rape of the constitution of our country, the electoral laws and state institutions by a few egoistic individuals who do not have the interest of our country at heart. We will be rightfully branded accomplices if we again allow the CPDM to use its election rigging organs; this Elections Cameroon in its present dispensation and the Ministry of Territorial Administration to organize yet another election whose results have already been prepared and filed awaiting proclamation even before elections are organized.

There comes a time when a people stand up and say enough is enough. This is the time. As a people, we cannot continue to be rendered hopeless by a government whose credibility has been very questionable for most of the last three decades. The deprived, the hopeless, the persecuted, the abused and the voiceless all look up to us exercising judiciously our leadership in their interest and in the interest of a better Cameroon for us all.

The SDF will like to stress that **credible elections remain an inalienable right to all Cameroonians and not a privilege**. It is only by exercising such a right in a free, peaceful, transparent and full participatory manner that good governance can be enthroned as an operational pre-condition in our public service. At times like this we would like to remind all forces of change in and out of Cameroon that this nation we all love so much is bigger than any of us as individuals, irrespective of our positions; this beloved country is bigger than any party or all our parties put together. For that reason, we are calling on all forces aspiring for a better Cameroon to join forces and ensure that the one precondition for a just, peaceful and prosperous society is laid down – **acceptable electoral reforms before we move into 2011**.

Our fight for an Independent Electoral Commission launched some 20 years ago yielded some fruits only after Mr. Biya bowed to the insistence of the Commonwealth and instituted Elections Cameroon (ELECAM) in 2006. The law instituting ELECAM was not a good one but Cameroonians at



large continued to nurse the hope that through a broad consultation process, independent and neutral people will be appointed into the Council and Directorate of ELECAM to allow for acceptable elections to be organised in Cameroon.

In his usual provocative manner, Mr. Biya finally signed a decree in violation of the law on ELECAM appointing CPDM central committee members into ELECAM. This action further put into jeopardy the already fragile democratic process in the country and thereby effectively taking us back to a one party dictatorship. The SDF met in Yaoundé on the 13th of January 2009 and took a firm stand against this violation of the law. Since then, the SDF has not stopped to decry the dangers these violations and the subsequent alterations have on the fragile stability of the country. Only credible and accepted democratic elections can ensure the stability and the effectiveness of the state. An effective state is the precondition for eradicating poverty.

Regarding the provisions of the law, the National Executive Committee of the SDF through its Legal Department undertook every legal measure it deemed necessary at that time and in the circumstances to stop the violation of the law. The following actions were carried out:

- 1) A Petition was submitted to the President of the Republic seeking annulment of the said decrees that made the appointments
- 2) Proceedings were instituted before the competent jurisdiction for a Stay of Execution and annulment of the decrees of appointment.
- 3) The notice of the Stay of Execution was served on the President of the Republic and on the Constitutional Council in order that the purported appointees do not take oath of office.

Further to these actions, the National Executive Committee of the SDF took a firm stand and continues to reiterated its position that there will be **no elections in Cameroon under the present dispensations of ELECAM** because of:

- The violation of Section 1 of Law No. 2006/011 of the 29th December 2006 which provides in its sub-section 2 that ELECAM is an independent organisation in charge of the organisation, the management and supervision of the whole electoral process
- The violation of Section 6 of the same law which provides that the electoral board ensures the respect of the electoral law by all stake holders in a manner as to ascertain the regularity, impartiality, objectivity, transparency and sincerity of the polls?
- The violation of section 8, sub-section 2 of the same law which provides that members of the electoral board are chosen from amongst personalities of Cameroonian nationality known for their competence, their moral integrity, their intellectual honesty, their sense of patriotism and their spirit of neutrality and impartiality.
- The violation of section 8, sub-section 3 of the same law which provides that the president, the vice president and members of the electoral board are appointed by decree of the President of the Republic after consultation with political parties represented at the National Assembly and members of the civil society.





- The violation of section 13 of the same law which provides that the functions of President, Vice President and Members of the Electoral Board are incompatible with the functions or the capacity of:
 - Members of government and persons ranking as such
 - Members of the constitutional council
 - Magistrates in active service
 - Secretaries general of Ministries and persons ranking as such
 - Director General of Public enterprises and Parastatals
 - Directors of Central Administration and persons ranking as such
 - Elected members of parliament, regional and local councils
 - Governors, Senior Divisional Officers, Sub Divisional Officers and District Heads
 - Traditional Rulers
 - Members of the Forces of Law and Order
 - Members of a Political Party or of a group that supports a political party, list of candidates or candidates

The violation of the above provisions is evident in the fact that:

- 1) Mr Fonkam Samuel Azu'u was member of the Central Committee of the CPDM and Assistant Secretary General of the National Assembly at the time of his appointment. The conditionality of his morality was further thrown into doubt with allegations of immigration fraud being raised against him at the time of his appointment as Chairman of ELECAM;
- 2) Dr Bomba Nkolo Cecile was a member of the Political Bureau of the CPDM at the time of her appointment as Board Member of ELECAM. She was also signatory to the xenophobic and hate propagating Yaoundé Memorandum of February 2008 which called for genocide against none Beti residents in Yaoundé.
- 3) Mrs Njeuma Dorothy Limunga was member of the Political Bureau of the CPDM at the time of her appointment as ELECAM Board member, former CPDM Minister and former University Vice Chancellor, especially during the bloody and deadly University of Buea strike and as well as National Coordinator of the African Peer Review Mechanism appointed by Mr. Biya.
- 4) Mr Abdoulaye Babale was a member of the Central Committee of the CPDM with secretarial duties and former CPDM minister as well as representative of the CPDM at the National Vote Counting Commission at the time of his appointment as Board member of ELECAM;
- 5) Mr Ejake Mbonda Thomas, former CPDM Governor of the South West Province especially during the bloody and deadly University of Buea student strike and Inspector general at the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralisation at the time of his appointment as Board member of ELECAM ;
- 6) Mr Mana Souangele Jules was CPDM Mayor of Kribi Rural and sub-director in charge of special duties at the Presidency of the Republic at the time of his appointment as Board member of ELECAM;
- 7) Hon Prof Mbonda Elie, former CPDM member of Parliament, active and committed militant of the CPDM at the time of his appointment as Board member of ELECAM;
- 8) Rev Massi Gams Dieudonné, suspended from his post in his church, the Eglise Présbytérienne Cameronaise (EPC) in 2004.
- 9) Mrs Sadou Daoudou née Lady Bawa was an engaged and staunch CPDM militant at the time



- of her appointment as Board member of ELECAM;
- 10) Mr Mohamadou Sani Taminou, appointed Director of ELECAM, was sub-director in charge of special duties at the Presidency of the Republic and Chairman of the Telecommunication Regulatory Board, member of the CPDM at the time of his appointment as Director of Elections Cameroon;
 - 11) Mr Eric Essousse, appointed Deputy Director of ELECAM, was former Director of Political Affairs at MINATD and an official in the Prime Minister's office at the time of his appointment Deputy Director of Elections Cameroon;

Further to these open and ongoing violations, the CPDM regime re-introduced the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralisation into the electoral process after the same regime had removed it evidently due to the poor results obtained.

This Ministry's track record of election organisation and rigging implementation since 1992 has been widely documented and the SDF has resolved to take appropriate legal action against the regime for its continuous violation of our fundamental human rights. Mr. Biya and the CPDM have used, amongst others, the following election rigging techniques to stifle the implementation of democracy in Cameroon:

- The delaying of electoral reform as the cornerstone of Cameroon's poor elections and bad governance at all state levels;
- The demarcation of constituencies is done to the sole consideration of electoral objectives and therefore our parliamentary representation does not reflect the real representation of the people;
- The absence of a population census that reflects the true population of Cameroon;
- Hand picking participant members of his ruling party the CPDM to plan, organize and manage or mismanage Cameroon elections as evidenced above with the appointment of 10 CPDM diehard militants and leaders out of 11 ELECAM Election Board members to organize Cameroon's 2011 Presidential election in violation of the electoral law that put in place ELECAM. This tendency is replicated at all levels;
- Orchestrated voter apathy and low voter turnout at elections through a culture of repeatedly stealing voter choices and pronouncing voting results that do not tie with what happened at polling stations and in some instances are announced before vote counting even starts;
- The multiple ballot technique which requires voters especially from the parastatal companies and plantations to present the opposition ballot papers present after voting to ensure they voted CPDM as a condition to obtain their salary and even secure their jobs;
- Ensuring that voting stations in areas where rigging is difficult do not have the required voting papers or indelible ink, etc.. in their appropriate quantities.
- The chartering of paid voters to many voting stations to vote multiple times;
- The non-issuing of voting cards to registered voters who are perceived to be of the opposition mainly due to tribal considerations;
- The registration at far off polling stations of suspected opposition militants as a strategy of preventing them from voting;
- Stuffing of voting boxes before, during or after elections before vote counting;
- Creation of ghost polling stations, ghost voters and doctored polling results before and after



polls – as an example, the Bakassi peninsula provided 3 parliamentary seats to the CPDM eighteen months before it got officially transferred to Cameroon.

- Unlimited use of state resources to finance the CPDM party before and during election campaigns;
- Use of state resources to bribe and force voters to vote for the CPDM;
- Unobserved ballot counting and tabulation of results in polling stations where representatives of the opposition have been repressively driven away;
- Delayed transfer of polling results to vote aggregation centers to enable changes and falsifications to the result sheets;
- Falsification of polling station results by state Sub Divisional and Divisional Officers as per instruction from CPDM central command centers;
- CPDM disguised controlled ballot box transportation without supervision and the presence of all the contestants' polling agents;
- Unconstitutional banning of the Diaspora from voting;
- A systematic deprivation of opposition parties from constitutional election funds meant for campaigns by ensuring that the funds are received late and that the amounts communicated are far above the amounts received;
- A near monopoly of state media before and during campaign time, whether it be radio, print or television;
- Screening and selective accreditation of international observer missions and the use of paid lobby groups to divulgate false information on the elections;
- Intimidation and persecution of opposition leadership;
- Bribery and coercion of rural traditional chiefs to intimidate and force their kinsmen to vote the CPDM as evidenced with the case of Fon Doh of Balikumbat who assassinated the SDF's representative for electoral motives.
- Banning or delay in the authorization of opposition rallies in certain parts of the country as per instruction from the CPDM command centre;
- Delayed declaration of polling results to ensure the CPDM command centre accepts them after sufficient doctoring has been carried out by appointed agents;

With all due considerations that:

All of these violations of the law are the handy work of the President of the Republic, guarantor of the Constitution, the Institutions of the Republic and promulgator of the Laws. He therefore confirmed his bad faith and the fears of the SDF as expressed during the abortive consultations with the Prime Minister and even thereafter.

The vital role expected to be played by ELECAM as a neutral arbiter in the establishment of democracy and by extension the prevention of conflicts in Cameroon is therefore jeopardized.

We therefore patriotically call on you;

- Considering the importance of the acceptance of this central institution of an election by a majority of the stakeholders to ensure the respect of its role and especially the results that it will proclaim;





- Considering that the non respect of democratic rules is often at the origin of most major conflicts in countries where the democratic process has not been respected and empowered like Zimbabwe, Kenya, Togo and Chad just to name a few;
- Considering that Mr. Biya has repeatedly deceived Cameroonians and the International Community by intentionally holding back our democratic process for the past 20 years in his sole egoistic interests;

To collectively reaffirm that:

NO ELECTIONS WILL TAKE PLACE IN THIS COUNTRY UNDER THE PRESENT DISPENSATIONS AND CONDITIONS.

In the absence of a credible Electoral Code and an Independent Electoral Commission, which we no longer expect from this government, we believe that acceptable elections can only be organized if the following minimum conditions are met:

1. A new electoral register is put in place
2. The full respect of the provisions of Art. 8 & Art.13 of the law on ELECAM governing the independence and neutrality of the members of the Council and Directorate of ELECAM and
3. The immediate appointment of a new Council and Directorate members into ELECAM as well as the application of the same provisions to the regional, divisional, sub-divisional and local representations.
4. The inclusion of biometric data on voter registers and the voter cards
5. The exclusion of the Ministry of Territorial Administration from all ELECAM functions
6. The inclusion of participating political parties at all decision-making levels and in all commissions charged with the organization and conduct of elections
7. The utilization of the single ballot paper
8. The institution of a two round presidential election
9. The endowment of ELECAM with Effective Financial Autonomy.
10. Clear protocols should be put in place to ban the participation of public officials and civil servants in campaigning

We sincerely believe that these minimum criteria can be attained if we push for them together in order to save our country from collapse pending the implementation of a credible electoral system after this election.

It is our collective responsibility to arrest and reverse Cameroon's failure. We therefore call on all Cameroonians and especially your organisation;

NOT TO FALL INTO THE TRAP OF THE CPDM-ELECAM REGISTRATION EXERCISE UNTIL THE MINIMUM CRITERIA FOR ACCEPTABLE ELECTIONS HAVE BEEN MET.

In the light of the foregoing, the SDF strongly believes that in order to effectively join the



commonwealth of democratic nations, Cameroon inevitably requires a transition after the forthcoming presidential election. During this transition period, Cameroonians will be brought on to a common table to lay down basic and solid state institutions. We envisage that this transition would last three years during which a transitional government will organize a Constitutional Conference that will debate and agree on:

1. The form of state for Cameroon. The SDF prefers a Federal Form of State considering the actual regions with an efficient mechanism for devolution of powers but Cameroonians can decide the actual form during the Constitutional Conference;
2. A viable Independent Electoral Commission that will be charged with the conduct of Elections, starting from registration of voters and political parties to the proclamation of results with a system of registration of voters that enables the voter to instantly receive a voter's card containing the voter's photograph, biometric data and identification that are equally replicated on the electoral register;
3. A consensual Electoral Code for Cameroon that will do away with the existing multifarious and conflicting electoral laws;
4. A population census that will truly reflect the population of Cameroon
5. A new constitution for Cameroon that will replace the present two conflicting constitutions and which will be submitted to the Cameroonian people for adoption by way of referendum.

If the minimum necessary dispensations to allow ELECAM organize an acceptable election are met, together we would eventually decide to go in for the 2011 presidential Election and what has been outlined above would be the core of our program and proposition to the Cameroonian people. The choice of who would become our presidential candidate will necessarily be predicated on his/her commitment and ability to implement this program.

This is the position of the SDF, which we hope will retain your organization's attention and acceptance. In this light, we remain available for any further clarifications and constructive debates.

While looking forward to our collaboration on this capital issue of putting in place the minimum acceptable electoral dispensations, please accept with all due respect our fraternal regards.

Ni John FRU-NDI
National Chairman

