

Throughout 1993, disturbing incidents continued to be reported. The opposition is regularly harassed by the police which makes liberal use of a law which allows recourse to unlimited powers of administrative detention. Students and strikers are severely suppressed. Extortion is rampant and the perpetrators rarely disciplined or brought to justice. Five years of economic crisis has fanned criminality. Press liberty is problematic. Television and radio is a government monopoly. Censure of private newspapers has intensified but several remain highly critical. Any public activity requires prior authorization which is often refused to the opposition. The legal system is subject to multiple pressures which cast serious doubts on its independence.

CANADIAN POSITION

Canada has been very active in the Cameroonian human rights situation. It has been especially active in the electoral field, having sent technical expert Louis Massicotte in November 1991. Canada also sent observers to the parliamentary elections of March and the presidential election of November 1992. Numerous irregularities, especially in the presidential election, make it impossible to vouchsafe the credibility of the announced results. Minister Landry met with Cameroonian Foreign Minister-delegate Nkwain, and publicly expressed Canada's concern over the presidential election and the repressive actions which followed. The lifting of the state of emergency, the liberation of John Fru Ndi and the constituting of a government of national unity largely satisfied Canada's post-electoral preoccupations. Nevertheless, Canada has maintained the pressure throughout 1993, protesting the repression of student activities, meeting government and opposition leaders and exhorting them to act responsibly, and funding the presence of the national president of the Cameroonian Human Rights Committee at the Vienna meeting of national human rights organizations held in parallel with the World Conference on Human Rights in June 1993. Cameroon can have no doubt as to the importance Canada attaches to the advancement of human rights, good governance and democratic development.

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