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On 6<sup>th</sup> November 1982, after the unexpected resignation of President Ahidjo on 4<sup>th</sup> November 1982, Mr. Paul Biya acting as Prime Minister at the time according to the then constitutional provisions became the new President of the United Republic of Cameroon<sup>49</sup>. In 1984, President Paul Biya pushed through another constitutional amendment that further changed the name of the country from the United Republic of Cameroon to the “La Republique du Cameroun”<sup>50</sup> as it still remains till date. This appellation “La Republique du Cameroun” is the name French Cameroon had on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1960 after their independence from France before joining the British Southern Cameroons to become the Federal Republic of Cameroon.

The persistent change of the country’s name was thus seen as secret plans to completely annex the Anglophones<sup>51</sup> as their identity seems to have been buried in a union which they came into as an independent group of people with different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The loss of identity felt by the Anglophones and the “Jacobin” French system of administration heralded feelings of marginalization, frustration and lack of autonomy. As Burton argued, a group of people cannot be forced to accept majority rule that tries to deny their cultural identity and values.<sup>52</sup> Furthermore, Burton in his generic theory of conflict based on the human needs theory argues that certain basic ontological human needs exists which are universal to every human development and therefore, if the socialization process of any society is not compatible with such human needs, frustration, anti-social personal and group behaviors will set in.<sup>53</sup> In the same light, Burton submits that deterrence expressed in the use of national and international strategic

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<sup>47</sup>Stark, F. (1976). “Federalism in Cameroon: The shadow and the Reality.” *Canadian journal of African Studies*, 10(3), pp. 423-442. DOI: 10.2307/483799

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 423

<sup>49</sup> Ngoh, V.J. (1996). *Op. cit., supra*

<sup>50</sup> Law No. 84-1 of 4<sup>th</sup> February 1984

<sup>51</sup> Ebune, J. B. (2016). “The dilemma of the federal system in West Cameroon, 1961 – 1972”. *Journal of Scientific Research and Studies Vol. 3*(7), pp. 133-139. ISSN 2375-8791

<sup>52</sup> Burton (1990). *op. cit.* p. 39

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33

defense policies cannot deter in such situations which arise as a result of loss of identity and the non-gratification of ontologically derived human needs.<sup>54</sup>

The Anglophone crisis in Cameroon is seen as one where the identity of the people has been lost and their basic human needs unsatisfied while their values are made inferior to other values. This therefore makes the conflict to be deep-rooted in nature and effective solutions can only be obtained through a clinical examination of its root causes. A return to a Federal system of state as it were in 1961 could have been the best solution to the crisis. This is because as Elaigwu & Olorunsola argued, “*Federalism basically emanates from the desire of people to form a union without necessary losing their various identities*”.<sup>55</sup> The secession option introduced by some activists of the Anglophone crisis is a result of President Biya’s persistent refusal to discuss the Federal option.<sup>56</sup> It’s therefore imperative that the regime in power be more receptive to the crisis, and take responsibility in looking at positive answers to some important questions such as: Why do we exist as Cameroonians? What are the things that make us proud as Cameroonians? And most importantly, what type of Cameroon, we all want for posterity? Candid and responsible answers to these questions will go a long way to catalyze a path way to peace and why not a complete annihilation of the crisis.

### **Consequences of the Crisis**

Since the peak of the crisis in late November 2016, the social and economic consequences of the crisis have enormous negative effects on the population. A succinct description of the social and economic consequences of the crisis is discussed below to draw the attention of the protagonists to be more receptive and resort to peaceful negotiations, with insights drawn from Burton’s conflict resolution approach and save the country from disintegration and possible future penury.

### **Social Consequences**

The Anglophone crisis in Cameroon has been fraught with devastating social consequences. Since the peak of the crisis in late 2016 to August 2019, about 6,000 schools have been shut down, while many of them have been set ablaze especially by separatist fighters who use schools boycott as a tool to coerce the government to resort to quick and lasting measures to the conflict. This has caused about 42 schools to be burnt down between February 2017 and May 2018 and

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<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 33-34

<sup>55</sup> Elaigwu, J. I. & Olorunsola, V., A. (1983). “Federalism & Politics of Compromise”, In Rothchild, D. & Olorunsola, V., A. (eds.), *State Versus Ethnic Claims: African Policy Dilemmas*, Westview Press: Boulder, Co. p. 282

<sup>56</sup> Konnings, P. J. & Nyamnjoh, F. B. (2004), *op. cit.*, *supra*

about 600,000 children out of school.<sup>57</sup> According to reports from the United Nation Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), 4 million people have been affected as a result of the crisis, 1.3 million people are in dire need of humanitarian aids, 160,000 people are targeted, 437,500 people internally displaced, 500, 000 people in need in host communities, while 330,000 others are in urgent need of humanitarian aid.<sup>58</sup> These are therefore clear indications that the people in the two conflict regions are living in precarious conditions and ad hoc measures need to be taken to address the situation.

Extrajudicial killings, man slaughter, arson attacks, abductions for ransom have also been common phenomena plaguing the crisis regions. A careful examination of the callous situation of what is happening in the restive English speaking regions will warrant one to conclude that the inhabitants live in a Hobbesian state of nature<sup>59</sup> where life for man is very brutish and people live in constant fear of the unknown. The Cameroon's Government militia has been accused many times for killing innocent unarmed civilians. An example is the case of the October 1<sup>st</sup> 2017 scenario where over a dozen of innocent civilians were shot dead by the military and many arrested.<sup>60</sup> A spectrum of non-governmental organizations in and out of the country has decried such gross violations of fundamental human rights and highlights the need for the government to initiate frank political dialogue to end the conflict.<sup>61</sup> A report published by "Journal du Cameroun" on December 29th, 2018, reveals the beheading of a soldier in Bamenda-the chief town of the North West region by suspected separatist fighters after heavy gunshots.<sup>62</sup> This is feared that the situation might escalate if effective remedies are not pursued to end the conflict.

In an interview conducted by the British Broadcasting Cooperation (BBC) in 2018 with one of Cameroon's Infantry Battalion army General; General Agah Robinson who was stationed in Bamenda, averred that about 1,200 lives including; civilians, military and police officers and separatists fighters have been lost at the time<sup>63</sup>. The numbers have increase to about 1,850 lives lost so far made up of 235 military and police officers, 650 civilians and about a thousand

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<sup>57</sup> BBC, Africa (June 2018). "Burning Cameroon: images you are not meant to see".

<sup>58</sup> UNOCHA 2018 report on the Anglophone crisis in Cameroon

<sup>59</sup> Hobbes, T. (1990). "Of the Natural Condition of Mankind, as Concerning their Felicity, and Misery," *Classics of International Relation*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. John Vasques (ed.). Englewood, NJ: Prentice- Hall. Pp. 213- 15

<sup>60</sup> Azad (2017), *op. cit. supra*

<sup>61</sup> International Crisis Group (ICG), African Report No. 272

<sup>62</sup> Cameroon: "Soldier beheaded as gunshots rock Bamenda". *Journal du Cameroon*, 29 December, 2018

<sup>63</sup> Forbe, N., Vaukengkeng, A., Adamu, P. (2019). Analysis of the Socio-Economic Consequences of the Crisis in the North West and South West Regions of Cameroon on the Economy of the two Regions (2016-208). *International Journal of economics, commerce and management*, vol.7 (2). Pp. 371-388. ISBN 23480386

separatist fighters, while government's report submitting somewhat different figures claims that 1,600 lives have been lost.<sup>64</sup> However, these figures only show casualties in areas which have been easily accessible and documented. Foreign missionaries have also been killed amidst the crisis. These are the cases of the two foreign missionaries murdered in Bamenda, one being an American missionary by name Charles Wesco Trumann<sup>65</sup> and the other a Ghanaian pastor named Isaac Atoh who worked with Destiny Impact Ministries.<sup>66</sup>

Arson attacks have also been rampant. Sources claim that Government militias have been responsible for most of the arson attacks as a result of retaliations when a military agent is killed by separatist fighters. This is the case where satellite images shows the military setting ablaze Kwakwa village on December, 2017.<sup>67</sup> The Center for Human Rights and Democracy in Africa (CHRDA) in August 2018 published a list of 106 villages which have been raided by the military since 2017 with 71 villages completely destroyed and depopulated and 35 partially deserted.<sup>68</sup> Kumbo, the chief town of Bui Division in the North West region has suffered most of the arson attacks with over 750 houses burnt to ashes.<sup>69</sup>

Separatist fighters (Amba boys) have been strongly accused of abductions for ransom. This is seen in cases where some students who try not to boycott school are most often than not kidnapped and ransoms paid before being released. The strategy has been used to raise funds by separatist fighters as most often persons are kidnapped and ransoms demanded before being released<sup>70</sup>.

### **Economic Consequences**

The crisis has also registered some major economic concerns which need to be quickly addressed in order to save the economy from collapsing. The Cameroon's economy is the largest in the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC) and it needs to maintain its

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<sup>64</sup> Andzongo, S. (May 2019). "20 months of riots in Anglophone regions kill 1,850". *International Crisis Group*. Retrieved from <https://www.Businessincameroon.com>

<sup>65</sup> "Journal du Cameroun" (October 2018). "American missionary killed in Bambui-Bamenda of the North West Region of the Cameroon"

<sup>66</sup> Cameroon Concord News (July 2018). "Ghanaian pastor brutally murdered in Southern Cameroons"

<sup>67</sup> Amnesty International (June 2018). "Cameroon: Anglophone regions gripped by deadly violence"

<sup>68</sup> CHRDA (August 2018). "Shocking list of military atrocities in Cameroon's NW & SW regions. *Journal du Cameroun*". Retrieved online at <https://www.journalducameroun.com>

<sup>69</sup> Mimi Mefo (March 2019). "Anglophone Crisis: Over 358 civilians killed, at least 750 houses burnt in Kumbo". Retrieved from, <https://mimimefoinfos.com/anglophone-crisis-over-358-civilians-killed-at-least-750-houses-burnt-in-kumbo/>

<sup>70</sup> DW News (Africa) (05<sup>th</sup> November 2018). Cameroon stunned by mass kidnap of children. Retrieved from <https://www.google.com/amp/s/amp.dw.com/en/cameroon-stunned-by-mass-kidnap-of-children/>

stability in order to promote regional growth and balance. Billions of FCFA have been lost<sup>71</sup> since the start of the Anglophone crisis which has adverse effects on the country's economy. The crisis regions (North West & South West) local economies are characterized by oil and gas, intensive large and small scales agricultural corporations supplying foreign markets, banking and finance which contributes to about 20% of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Unfortunately, these corporations have been partially or completely grounded by belligerent's action, while some have been ravaged by fire. This is the case of the May 31<sup>st</sup> 2019 fire outbreak at the lone National Oil Refinery (SONARA) in the South West Region where about 10million liters of crude oil was consumed by fire and loss in real property amounted to billions of FCFA.<sup>72</sup>

The operations of the Cameroon Development Cooperation (CDC) as the second largest employer after the government have been greatly perturbed by the crisis. The CDC cultivates agricultural raw products like banana, rubber, cocoa and finish products like palm oil. Productivity has fallen so greatly and according to reports published by Business in Cameroon in July 2018, the government had spent huge amount of money to import 97,000 tons of palm oil in order to prevent shortages. While in another report by the same source, the corporation witnessed a drastic fall in the export of banana by 15,209 tons as compared to previous years export, and 2.2 billion FCFA<sup>73</sup> is loss monthly in terms of salaries.<sup>74</sup>

The National Inter-employers Group (GICAM) on its part submitted that so far, some 2,153 billion FCFA has been lost in real property as a result of the crisis, while out of 86% of companies surveyed by the organization, 36% of them have incurred significant loss and 50% have incurred serious damages and losses. GICAM went further to report that there are shortages in turnover of about 269,056 billion FCFA, with about 5.9 billion FCFA lost in government's tax revenues while 6,344 jobs have been lost.

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<sup>71</sup> Forbe, N., Vaukengkeng, A., Adamu, P. (2019), *Op. cit.*, p. 381

<sup>72</sup> Cameroon's oil refinery burnt down, government says it is "an accident". *Business in Cameroon.com*, June 2019

<sup>73</sup> Yonathan, Morse (2017). "Cameroon has been in crisis for six months. Here is what you need to know". *The Washington Post*

<sup>74</sup> Cameroon's banana exports declines. *Journal du Cameroun*. May 07<sup>th</sup> 2018. Retrieved at <https://www.journalducameroun.com/en/>

A study conducted by Ngang Eric<sup>75</sup> on the assessment of the economic consequences of internet shutdown in the two regions from January to April 2017 and October 2017, shows very negative economic impacts. Using the Framework for calculating the Economic Impact of Internet Disruption in Sub-Sahara Africa (CIPESA), he submitted that internet black out and applications disruption in the restive NW and SW regions of Cameroon went on for about 246 days implying total economic loss of **498,958,721,320 FCFA** (four hundred and ninety eight billions, nine hundred and fifty eight millions, seven hundred and twenty one thousands, three hundred and twenty francs).

The socio-economic consequences of the Anglophone Crisis in Cameroon are major causes for concern. This is very pathetic to a country which is faced with low levels of development and high rate of unemployment. The amount of money lost so far as the result of the crisis is enough money to invest in the country's economy and create more jobs for its fast growing population. The socio-economic situation described here is just a pilot analysis of the situation. A comprehensive analysis of the socio-economic consequences will reveal greater negative effects. It is therefore important at this juncture for the government to embark on concrete measures to resolve the conflict and save the country from collapsing. The conflict is an identity conflict where the Anglophones are exasperated with the regime in power and the system due to the "Jacobin" French system of governance which concentrates power at the center and harbors the marginalization of the Anglophones. Therefore, a sustainable solution entails a critical evaluation of the root causes and put in place measures to properly address them.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The Anglophone crisis in Cameroon is an identity conflict which owes its origin from the colonial era. The conflict can also be seen as a protracted and intractable conflict and its effective demise can only be successful with conditions which favor the satisfaction of basic ontological human needs and greater autonomy to be given to the people. Sites argued that if given the opportunity man will attempt at all odds to control his environment and it is for no other reason, but to secure his basic needs and values. Grievances will arise as a result of the non-gratification of basic ontological human needs and values or where Identity is loss. In such situations, deterrence theories in terms of strategic defense policies cannot resolve the problem.

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<sup>75</sup> Ngang, E., (2018). Assessing The Socio-economic Impact of Internet Shutdown In The English Speaking Regions Of Cameroon From a Multistakeholder and Multisector Perspective. AfroLeadership 2018.



Any attempt to contain the situation will only evolve into more quagmires. This explains why the strategic defense option employed by the Cameroon's government to solve the Anglophone crisis, which comes as a result of grievances of loss of identity, marginalization, and unsatisfied ontological human needs, has failed. As Burton noted, conflict resolution was designed for conflicts where it seems difficult to obtain satisfactory solutions. Burton's approach centers on uncovering the root causes of the problem and putting in place measures where the socialization process encourages human development and the gratification of basic human needs.

The proper implementation of the following recommendations drawn from evidences learned from John Burton's Approach to Conflict Resolution will go a long way to resolve the Anglophone crisis and many other identity conflicts around the World today.

1. The President of the Republic should peacefully address the Anglophones, including the acknowledgement of all those who are in the bushes, and all who have been seriously affected by the crisis. In his address, he should make an official recognition of the Anglophone problem and accentuate the will of the government to engage in a meaningful and frank political dialogue to end the crisis. By doing this, the government will be creating a conducive environment for both parties and all those involve in the crisis to be able to take part in the dialogue. What John Burton terms "*provention*".
2. The government should ensure the immediate and unconditional release of Sisiku Ayuk Tabe and Co. Sisku Ayuk Tabe, as one of the Anglophone leaders in the crisis, is held at high esteemed by separatist fighters, as can be observed in the constant call for ghost town by separatists in the Anglophone regions whenever he and his Co. are being taken to court. Thus, releasing Sisiku Ayuk Tabe and Co. will help calm emotions and also indicates government's willingness to engage in a meaningful and inclusive dialogue.
3. Pre-talks should be held between the government and the Anglophone leaders released from prison in the presence of a credible third party. The pre-talks should focus on warranting both parties to sign an accord to lay-down their arms, and most importantly, demilitarize the two Anglophone regions. As Burton noted, intractable conflicts like the Anglophone crisis, which is characterized by issues of loss of identity and marginalization heralding from the non-gratification of basic ontological human needs, submits that, the use of strategic defense policies cannot bring about any satisfactory solution. Furthermore, if we are to go with the 1996 Constitution which advocates for the right of citizens to peaceful protest, and which is also accentuated in the 1990 laws on the freedom of

association and assembly, one will be attempted to pose the question: Why the continuous use of military might or hard power, in the Anglophone regions to crackdown or solve a problem which emanates from the right to peaceful protest and self-determination of a group of people with cultural and linguistic specificities? Thus, it is therefore testament that, the two regions be de-militarized, so that a conducive environment is put in place for a frank and inclusive political dialogue to be held.

4. A neutral peace keeping police force possibly from the United Nations or African Union should be charged with the responsibility to protect human life and property within the two regions while ground work for dialogue continues.
5. General amnesty and Presidential clemency should be given to all persons incarcerated as a result of the crisis and to all persons who are in exile as a result of the crisis. This is to enable all stakeholders involve in the whole scenario to be able to partake in the inclusive and frank dialogue.
6. Based on the two main parties involve, that is the Anglophones represented by their leaders and the government, they should choose a suitable environment and hold an inclusive and frank political dialogue, with no pre-conditions and no subject matter to be treated as a taboo. The genesis of the Anglophone problem should also be clinically examined. All proposals should be welcomed on the dialogue table and honestly discussed. This should be done in the presence of a credible third party, whose main role as Burton argued, is to guide the parties involve and also help filter out all force assumptions brought up by any party.
7. On the dialogue table, it will be very important for both parties to take responsibility, brainstorm and look for positive answers to questions like: Why do we exist as Cameroonians? What are the things that make us proud as Cameroonians? And most importantly, what type of Cameroon, do we all want for posterity? Candid and responsible answers to these questions will go a long way to catalyze a path way to peace and why not a complete annihilation of the crisis.

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