



GLOBAL CAMPAIGN AGAINST MILITARY SPENDING

GCOMS2018

FINAL REPORT

Under the coordination of
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Member of the Council of IPB, Member of the Organizing Committee of the World Campaign.

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INTRODUCTION

As part of the celebration of the 8th edition of the International Day of Action on Military Expenditures, NDH-Cameroon, as usual, took part from 14 April to 03 May 2018 in the global campaign to reduce military spending (GCOMS) initiated for this purpose by the International Peace Bureau (IPB of its acronym). Launched in December 2014, the campaign aims to get governments around the world to cut military spending by up to 10 percent to boost investment in vital social sectors such as health, education, employment, labor, jobs, environmental protection, food etc ... The participation of NDH in this 8th edition of the campaign has been very active. It focused on two main points namely

- The publication of its declaration and,
- The animation of selfies campaign on social networks (face book)

THE LAUNCHING OF THE CAMPAIGN

The campaign unfolded in two difference phases in NDH-Cameroon. First, a statement was drafted and posted on both the NDH website and on its Face book page, www.ndhcam.org Face book.com/ndhcam, respectively.

This statement made it possible to take stock of the evolution of Cameroon's military spending in 2017, while calling on the government on the need to reduce these expenditures.

NDH-Cameroon then intensified her campaign through the production of selfie photos with messages on the need of development of key sectors of the economy, such as, health, entrepreneurship, education, infrastructure, and environment. The various themes and messages presented complemented the phrase:

"Reducing 10% of military assets could save our planet ... #Movethemoney! To" Thus, several messages were sent according to the themes;

• In terms of education:

The two messages were written in both English and French

- move the money to: Financier la construction des Ecoles

-Move the money to: provide free elementary education

- **In terms of infrastructures**

-Move the money to: the improvement of the transport network

-Move the money to: construction of roads

- **Social frameworks**

- Move the money to: provide health facilities

- Move the money to: help the homeless

- Move the money to: promote entrepreneurial ship

- Move the money to: create decent jobs

- Move the money to: protect the environment

THE METHODS USED

The campaign was carried out in the city of Yaoundé at NDH-Cameroon headquarters following a specific action plan. Two selfie photos were being provided each day, and this selfie photos program was carried on for one week. (01). There were then posted daily on the NDH's face book page. Logistically, an android phone and printed papers with the themes and messages, carrying the logo of the campaign were used. Citizens also snapped some selfie photos with special feature of the 2018 edition.

SELFIE CAMPAIGN EDITION

The 2018 selfie campaign was marked by the active participation of Cameroonian citizens, who seized the opportunity to speak about public policies and their situation. These citizens participation made the campaign more attractive and dynamic. Several other actors have shown interest in this campaign because of its rapid innovation.

RESULTS OBTAINED

Before the campaign could come to an end, we had already seen the results achieved Indeed. As we monitored our website on daily bases, we noticed that, several visitors have

visited the NDH Cameroon website and its facebook page. It appeared that, during the course of the campaign, the NDH's website has recorded more than 456 visitors, while its facebook page got about **700** visitors who liked the publications selfies on, access to good drinking water and garbage evacuations, received nearly **236** comments. Likewise **04** likes on other facebook platforms, like the very popular group "LCCLC = Cameroon is Cameroon", the publications on the campaign were "tagged" by **3750** people with **378** shares. We were finally able to count that, all the groups and face book pages had more than 4000 likes.

THE DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED

NDH - Cameroon campaign in general went on without many difficulties. However, a major difficulty was encountered, which included the poor internet connection that prevented the publication of the videos produced.

CONCLUSION

NDH's campaign to reduce military spending in Cameroon was aimed primarily at reminding states in general and the state of Cameroon in particular that, exorbitant military spending is a brake on peace and development. This campaign was an additional opportunity for NDH to challenge the Cameroonian government on the need to intensify investments on important social sectors to provide its citizens the full enjoyment of their fundamental rights and freedoms. This campaign was conducted by all NDH staff.

ANNEXES



GCOMS¹ -CAMEROON STATEMENT

CAMPAIGN ON MILITARY EXPENDITURE 2017

14TH APRIL – 03 MAY 2018

Reduce Military Spending,

“Invest in human needs”

Nouveaux Droits de l’Homme (NDH-Cameroon), Member of the Board of International Peace Bureau (IPB) has been actively involved since its launch in the Global Campaign on Military Spending (GCOMS) sponsored by IPB within the framework of the celebration of the International Day of Action on Military Spending (GDAMS), whose activities are planned from the 14th of April – 03 may 2018.

In fact, GCOMS is an international campaign initiated by the International Peace Bureau since 2014. Its goal is to get governments around the world to reduce by *10% their military spending* to strengthen investments in social sectors such as health, education, employment, environmental protection, food and many other areas.

However, despite this alarm, military spending in Cameroon, as in most other countries of the world, has increased significantly in **2018** indeed. The finance law passed in **November 2017** by the Cameroon Parliament gave a higher priority to the expenses of the army. Thus, a budget of **124.212 billion** CFA francs an equivalent of **189 million** Euros has been allocated to military spending. This sum represents a little of more than half of the overall budget of the Ministry of Defense which is **238.910 billion** CFA francs. There was a substantial increase over expenditures in **2016 and 2017** from **229.727 billion to 238.613 billion respectively**. The police have also witnessed a huge increased in their budget an envelope of **93.529 billion** was granted to the police unit.

According to the Ministry of Defense, these measures are aimed to *"endow the country with an even stronger and better equipped army on both human and logistical grounds"* and to allow the army to provide a firm response to the sporadic attacks of the country. *The Boko – Haram terrorist group in the North, as well as English-speaking Secessionists.*

The conclusion that emerges is that the military expenditures undertaken by the State of Cameroon so far have neither brought peace nor foster development throughout the country. On the contrary, there is an exponential increase in the number of refugees, forced movements of civilians, recurrent violations of human rights and many others.

While NDH appreciates the efforts made by the State of Cameroon in the defense of territorial integrity and the fight against terrorism, it nonetheless reiterates its attachment to the need to reduce military expenditure and a significant reduction in military spending will have a double positive effect.

First, it will reduce the level of militarization and violence against civilians, because it is now admitted that, the first victims in the various theaters of war in the world are the civilian population. The Syrian, Iraqi, Libyan are typical example, and closer to home, the “*Anglophone crisis*” in Cameroon justifies this finding.

Moreover, if the money use for military expenses is saved and reallocated intelligently, resources can be found for peace building, the protection of human rights and the fight against climate change.

NDH once more reminds all practically that, Cameroon, as a member of the United Nations has committed since January 2016 to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also called global goals. It is a global call to action to eradicate poverty, protect the planet and ensure that everyone lives in peace and prosperity. It is also in this same dimension that Cameroon has set itself on the path of emergence that it intends to achieve by 2035.

But how can we achieve all these goals if a large part of the budget is allocated to military spending?

How can we aspire for emergence if most of the investments evade the critical social sectors in order to give priority to needs of the military?

To round off, NDH thinks and believe that, it is more than ever urgent to limit military spending to finance the "weapons of massive construction" (education, health, employment, infrastructure sine qua non condition of a stable world, pacified, prosperous, and where respect for human rights is a categorical imperative.

Nouveaux Droits de l'Homme is a non-profit, non-governmental organization whose main mission is to promote, defends and extends human rights wherever they are violated. NDH deals with the different categories of rights, both those contained in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and those protected in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. NDH, created in 1977 and legalized in Cameroon in 1997 under No. 032 / RDDA / F35 / BAPP, now has consultative status with the United Nations.

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Yaoundé, the 03 may 2018