



MINISTÈRE DE LA COMMUNICATION
MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATION

**SECURITY UPDATE IN THE FAR NORTH REGION AND
GOVERNMENT'S STANCE ON THE UNREST OBSERVED IN SOME
LOCALITIES OF THE NORTH WEST REGION**

PRESS CONFERENCE

**INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT BY
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MINISTER OF COMMUNICATION**

Yaoundé, November 24, 2016

Distinguished Journalists,

I wish you a warm welcome to this encounter during which we shall be discussing on two issues that are of major interest to our country.

But before getting there, I would like to acknowledge the presence by my side and on this occasion, of **His Excellency the Minister of State, Minister of Justice, Keeper of the Seals, Her Excellency the Minister of Basic Education, His Excellency the Minister of Higher Education, and His Excellency the Minister of Secondary Education.**

Your Excellency the Minister of State, Your Excellencies, you are all welcome to the Ministry of Communication.

The topics at hand have to do with recent events that occurred on the war front against the Boko Haram terrorist group, on the one hand, and protests which occurred over the past few days in some localities of the North West Region, on the other hand.

I will start by giving you the update on the war front.

In the night between November 21 and 22 2016 at 1:20 a.m., the locality of Waza in the Logone and Chari Division was attacked by assailants of the Boko Haram terrorist group. During this attack, 59 houses were burned and several shops and food stocks looted. An elderly person was also wounded.

Earlier before this, at about 10 p.m. in the same night, the advanced security post at the Darak island, equally situated in the Logone and

Chari Division and placed under the control of the Multinational Joint Task Force was attacked by elements of the Boko Haram terrorist group.

On board of motorized crafts, assailants literally attacked this command post, probably with the sole intention of taking hold of this locality.

Faced with the vigorous response of our Defence Forces, the attackers retreated leaving behind a heavy weapon, ammunitions. Two of their elements were also captured.

Reports reaching us indicate that over ten attackers were killed.

With regard to our soldiers, who have defended our position with self-denial and courage, we unfortunately deplore the passing away of an officer and five rank-and-files, as well as a civilian member of the Darak vigilante committee.

On November 22, 2016, at about 11 a.m., on the Zamga-Djibrili road, a patrol vehicle of our Defence Forces was blown up by an improvised explosive device, leaving behind six injured including 4 serious cases that were rushed to the 4th Region Military Hospital for immediate care.

From November 22 to 23, 2016, based on information gathered from various sources, our Defence Forces, acting under the banner of Sector No. 1 of the Multinational Joint Task Force, carried out an incursion in the Sirdawala village, located some 8 kilometers within the Nigerian territory,

with the support of the Alpha and Emergence 4 operations, and in perfect synergy with Nigerian Armed Forces.

The balance sheet of this commendable attack to the detriment of the enemy is as follows:

During this victorious assault, 28 terrorists were completely neutralized. 02 assault rifles, 02 fragmentation grenades, 08 loader boxes, hundreds of ammunition, bows, sabers, spears, arrows, axes, knives, fighting uniforms, 05 motorcycles, In the manufacture of explosive devices, as well as propaganda materials of the terrorist group were seized.

No loss in human life was recorded within our Defense Forces.

On Thursday 24 November 2016, at about 7 a.m., two female suicide bombers belonging to the Boko Haram group were spotted by a patrol of the Rapid Intervention Battalion as they attempted to get into the Mora market premises. The first detonated her bomb without any casualties while the second was immediately shot dead by the BIR elements.

Distinguished Journalists,

As you must have understood well, the latest attacks of Boko Haram against our country, reveals that, though considerably weakened and diminished, this horde of criminals still has a certain capacity of nuisance.

The many defeats just experienced by Boko Haram during the recent fighting against our Forces and those of the frontline countries can only

strengthen the idea that their defeat has become inevitable and irreversible.

We should once again commend the professionalism, the unwavering determination, courage and patriotism of our valiant soldiers, who, in a particularly hostile environment, continue to showcase bravery in protecting our country from an implacable enemy solely driven by motives of extremism and tyranny coming from elsewhere.

To our Defense and Security Forces, the **President of the Republic, His Excellency Paul BIYA**, expresses the satisfaction and encouragement of the entire nation in their victorious struggle alongside all the armies of the coalition against the obscurantism and barbarism of the Boko Haram terrorist group.

The satisfaction of the **President of the Republic** also goes to the vigilante committees for their collaboration with administrative authorities, and with Defense and Security Forces in this struggle.

To all our compatriots who have just lost their lives in the attack at Darak, we pay homage and convey to their families the most heartfelt condolences of the **Head of State**.

On behalf of the **Head of State, commander-in-chief of the Army**, we are expressing the sincere thanks of the Cameroonian people to all our friendly countries for their invaluable support in the fight against this enemy.

Still on behalf of the **Head of State**, we extend Cameroon's recognition to the four countries at the frontline who together with Cameroon are involved in this fight, as well as our congratulations to the Multinational Joint Task Force for their commitment and determination to exterminate our common enemy.

Distinguished Journalists,

At a time when the entire nation is thus mobilized to defend our territorial integrity and to secure goods and people living within our borders, when the people as a whole are set for the battle, standing together as one behind their Head, and in solidarity with the sufferings of our compatriots of the Far North Region face with to the throes of blind violence imposed by this horde of barbarians under the Boko Haram criminal organization, some of our compatriots, fortunately marginal, chose to open a front of violence and unrest, like that which has just been observed with Indignation in certain areas of the Northwest Region, and mainly in the town of Bamenda.

The extremism and upheaval showcased by this minority of our fellow citizens is more than ever curious given that it occurs at the very moment when the whole world, admiring the organizational prowess of our country within the framework of the 10th edition of the Women's Africa Football Cup of Nations, is praising our nation, which, within extremely tight deadlines, was able to put up state-of-the-art sports, hotel and

communication facilities far beyond the requirements of the Confederation of African Football for such competition.

As you all aware, small groups of demonstrators, defying all the rules required for the preservation of public order, perpetrated acts of vandalism and plunder, obstructing traffic, breaking and destroying property, houses and public buildings, perpetrating physical attacks on persons, and going to the extent of killing one innocent person.

These acts were used as a pretext for the claims made by a group of lawyers practicing in the English-speaking Regions of the country and who were eventually joined in their move by some teachers in the same regions.

Such an outbreak of violence fostered to support corporatist, professional or societal demands is unacceptable in a country like Cameroon where there is constant dialogue between public institutions, social bodies and the population itself.

Those who are responsible for such abuses must know that nowhere in the world, disorder and insurrection have ever led to anything constructive.

However we would like to point out that never in this unrest, were Barristers, Teachers or Students, involved in these irresponsible acts of violence.

Moreover, with regard to the claims made by these different professions, the **Prime Minister, the Head of Government**, set up an interministerial committee to examine them and propose appropriate measures to the decision-making bodies.

It goes without saying that those claims, which are somehow technically grounded, will be given a close attention by these bodies. However, the claims which are made beyond our principles of life, our living together and, in general terms, the values of our Republic, cannot be addressed.

This applies in particular to everything concerning the territorial integrity of the Nation, the indivisible nature of the State, bilingualism enshrined in the Constitution and, in general, respect for the Fundamental Law of our country.

In the same way, the imperatives of national unity and integration must be regarded as intangible and non negotiable rules of our society, as well as the values of peace, solidarity and tolerance which underpin the stability of our country and the sustainability of its institutions.

We therefore call on all our compatriots to show proof of reserve, self-control, high sense of responsibility and citizenship, in a spirit of dialogue, which Cameroon has always upheld and which today make it one of the most respected countries in Africa and even in the world.

Thank you for your kind attention.