



# CAMEROON CONFLICT DIAGNOSTIC

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## Cameroon Historical Overview

The nation of Cameroon was formed via a merger of two distinct colonial territories, one administered by the British and the other by the French. The two territories initially joined together in 1961 as a federation called the Federal Republic of Cameroon, but in 1972 the federation was abolished in favour of a unitary state, the United Republic of Cameroon, now known simply as the Republic of Cameroon.<sup>i</sup> President Paul Biya took power in 1982 after the resignation of his predecessor, and the now 85-year-old Biya has ruled ever since. Currently, Anglophones only represent 20% of Cameroon's population, and over time the nation has developed into a predominantly Francophone oriented state, leaving Anglophones feeling alienated. Discontent has flared over issues like a lack of job opportunities and discrimination against Anglophones, perceived central government meddling with English schools and courts in Anglophone regions, and harsh crackdowns against Anglophone protestors.<sup>ii</sup> In 2017, these tensions turned violent as Anglophone rebel militias emerged, declared independence from the central Cameroonian government, and began launching attacks on soldiers and strategic targets.<sup>iii</sup>

### Conflict Risk Diagnostic Indicators Key

(+) Stabilizing Factor; (-) Destabilizing Factor; ± Mixed Factor

High Risk	
<p>Governance and Political Instability</p> <p>Direction:</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● - Cameroon's Freedom score from Freedom House is 22/100. This categorizes the country as Not Free<sup>iv</sup>.</li> <li>● - No freedom of assembly</li> <li>● - No independent judiciary. The supreme court serves at the pleasure of the president</li> <li>● - Voter turnout in Anglophone regions was extremely low during the last presidential election in October 2018, with estimates ranging from 5%-16% of people casting ballots.<sup>v</sup> A call from separatist groups to boycott the election and sporadic fighting between rebels and government forces kept people away from the polls.<sup>vi</sup></li> <li>● - Members of the opposition are frequently detained. Cameroon's most prominent opposition leader, Marice Kamto, (runner up in the last election) was detained and then charged with insurrection in January 2019</li> <li>● - President Paul Biya has been in power for 33 years, and is 85 years old.</li> <li>● - Cameroon's World Bank Corruption Index score is, on a scale from -2.5 (weak) to 2.5 (strong), -1.18, within the bottom 11% of all countries in the index<sup>vii</sup>.</li> </ul> <p>Risk Assessment: The propensity of the government to crack down harshly on protest movements has contributed to the outbreak of violence in Anglophone regions. The Anglophone protests started non-violently, with many teachers and lawyers participating, but the heavy handed response of the government, and the lack of political freedoms has led to many Anglophones feeling that their only option is violence.</p>
<p>Population Heterogeneity</p> <p>Direction:</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● ± Cameroon's ethnic distribution consists of an estimated 250 ethnic groups. They can be roughly grouped into seven categories: 31% Cameroon Highlanders, 19% Equatorial Bantu, 11% Kirdi, 10% Fulani, 8% Northwestern Bantu, 7% Eastern Nigritic, and 14% other.<sup>viii</sup></li> <li>● -Major tensions exist between the 20% Anglophone minority and 80% Francophone majority.</li> <li>● -The linguistic divide penetrates ethnic and religious groups. Sawa people living in Buea speak English, while Sawa people in nearby Douala speak French.<sup>ix</sup></li> <li>● -Lost Autonomy/Cultural Identity: Anglophones believe they are discriminated against socially and politically by the Francophone central government. They were governed in English and under British</li> </ul>

	<p>colonial governance structures until a referendum in 1961 joined English and French Cameroon.<sup>x</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● -Political Discrimination: Only one of 36 government ministers is Anglophone.<sup>xi</sup> French speaking judges are accused of speaking no English and having no knowledge of British Common Law. They are routinely assigned to preside over these Anglophone communities. The government shut down the internet in English speaking regions for 230 days between 2017 and 2018 to limit their communication and ability to protest and rebel.<sup>xii</sup> In 2017, \$225 million was invested in Paul Biya's South Region (population 761,000), as opposed to \$77 million in the Anglophone Southwest Region (population 1.4 million) and \$76 million in the Anglophone Northwest Region (population 1.7 million).<sup>xiii</sup></li> <li>● - Militant Mobilization: Various separatist fighting militias have formed. There are an estimated 500-1000 fighters actively pursuing Ambazonian secession. These include the Ambazonia Defence Forces, Southern Cameroons Defence Forces, the Lebialem Red Dragons, the Ambazonia Self-Defence Council, the Ambazonia Restoration Army, the Tigers of Ambazonia, and the Manyu Ghost Warriors.<sup>xiv</sup></li> <li>● - Support From Kindred Groups: The Cameroonian Diaspora has protested at the embassies of various foreign states.<sup>xv</sup></li> </ul> <p>Risk Assessment: Risk of ethnic rebellion is high. The Anglophone population continues to feel more disenfranchised from the larger Francophone community. At the same time, there are many passive Anglophones whom are attacked by Ambazonian fighters for failing to respect Ghost Town or other civil disobedience initiatives. This could lead to more Anglophones begrudgingly participating in the pursuit of secession, or could weaken local support for Ambazonia. Biya has introduced some initiatives, but they have failed to satisfy either the Ambazonian leadership or Anglophone public. With no resolution readily apparent, and little international intervention to be expected, the two groups are likely to continue to diverge, and worsening violence should be anticipated.</p>
<p>Demographic Stress</p> <p>Direction: Declining</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● ± Estimated population of 25.6 million with a slowly declining growth rate, reaching 2.59% in 2017 and steadily increasing urbanization, contributing to 55.77% of total population with a low population density relative to its neighbours <sup>xvi</sup>.</li> <li>● ± Significant decline in infant mortality rate and decline in fertility rate, although still at a high of 4.71 births/woman has resulted in a decline in percentage of youth 0-14, reaching 42.73% of total population<sup>xvii</sup>. Although declining, this youth bulge is still significant.</li> <li>● - Along with declining, yet still significant youth bulge, the median age is 18.6 years and 19.6% of population is between 15-24 years<sup>xviii</sup>; 62.33% of population is under 24 years.</li> </ul> <p>Risk Assessment: The increasing rate of urbanization along with the high percentage of youth are likely to attribute to increased tensions. Urbanization may expose the population to root cause of conflict regarding mistreatment of anglophones and the youth are more likely to participate in protests given possible frustration over employment prospects due to language barrier. Cameroon runs the risk of having these impressionable youth joining militant and rebel groups. The Mo Ibrahim foundation has highlighted that the “Promotion of socioeconomic integration of youth” is increasingly deteriorating<sup>xix</sup></p>
<p>Human Development</p> <p>Direction: Declining</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● - 65.28% of population has access to basic drinking water services as of 2015 compared to 88% of world population. There is a significant difference in access to water with 43.3% of the rural population having access versus 83.7% in urban areas. <sup>xx</sup> This is crucial given the biggest urban areas are in the francophone region and lack of access to public services is a cause of tension. This will also add strain to the country as the rate of urbanization increases.</li> <li>● - Access to basic sanitation has steadily declined across the country to a low of 38.84% in 2015 since 2000. The number is alarmingly lower for rural areas with only 18.9% of the rural population versus 55.6% of the urban population<sup>xxi</sup>.</li> <li>● + Life expectancy has slowly increased to 58 years in 2016, infant mortality rate has sharply decreased to 55.1 per 1000 births in 2017, maternal mortality rate has steadily decreased to 600 per 100,000 live births, prevalence of HIV has decreased to 3.7% of the population aged 15-49, primary school</li> </ul>

	<p>enrollment continues to increase to 95.2% of target population in 2017, secondary school enrollment gradually increased to 47.3% of target population.<sup>xxii</sup></p> <p>Risk Assessment: Human development indicators show progress except for access to public services such as water and sanitation. This will add strain on the government as urbanization increases. It will also increase the intensity of conflict since numbers are significantly lower for rural areas, given the majority of urban cities are in francophone regions. Poor access to public services was a cause of tension and protests from the anglophone citizens. Effectiveness of public services has been highlighted as showing “warning signs” by the Mo Ibrahim foundation<sup>xxiii</sup>.</p>
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<b>Moderate Risk</b>
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<p>History of Armed Conflict</p> <p>Direction: Declining</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● - Border conflicts with Nigeria lead to Nigerian soldiers moving into the disputed Bakassi Peninsula in 1993.</li> <li>● + The ICJ ruled that the Peninsula belonged to Cameroon in 2002, leading to Nigeria forces pulling out from Cameroonian territory in 2006</li> <li>● ± The terrorist group Boko Haram started operating in Northern Cameroon in 2013. Hundreds have been killed on both sides of the conflict, and it is classified as an intermediate conflict. Violence has lessened since 2017 as Boko Haram has been weakened.<sup>xxiv</sup></li> <li>● - in 2017, violent conflicts broke out between Anglophone rebels and government soldiers in the West of the country. Since several hundred but less than 1000 people have died so far, according to the Cameroonian military<sup>xxv</sup>, it is classified as an intermediate conflict.</li> <li>● - According to the UNHCR, there are 314,406 refugees in Cameroon, primarily from the Central African Republic and Nigeria. There are also 221,695 internally displaced people, as a result of Boko Haram's presence in the North as well as the Anglophone conflict.<sup>xxvi</sup></li> <li>● Risk Assessment: Cameroon does not have a history of violent conflicts with its neighbours, with its only recent conflict with another state (Nigeria) being resolved with little violence. Its main concerns are internal violence and substate actors like Boko Haram or rebel groups. The Anglophone conflict is currently still fairly small scale, but has the potential to turn into a full scale civil war.</li> </ul>
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<p>Economic Performance</p> <p>Direction: stable</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● + The economy has slightly recovered after a few years of decline in GDP growth, reaching an estimated 3.8% GDP growth in 2018 , up from 3.5% in 2017; due to rising oil prices. GDP is expected to continue growth to 4.4% in 2019 and 4.7% in 2020<sup>xxvii</sup>.</li> <li>● + Cameroon also recorded a healthy inflation rate of approximately 1.1% in 2018<sup>xxviii</sup>.</li> <li>● + The 2017 GDP per capita (PPP) of 3,714\$ has grown at a rate of 0.9% versus previous year<sup>xxix</sup>.</li> <li>● - The GINI coefficient in 2014 measuring income inequality was 0.466, translating to significant income inequality as depicted by 10% of population having 35% share of national income<sup>xxx</sup>.</li> <li>● - FDI stood at 2.33% of GDP<sup>xxxi</sup> due to Cameroon’s less than ideal business environment<sup>xxxii</sup>.</li> </ul> <p>Risk Assessment: The main expected contributor to the conflict will be the income inequality as it pertains to the less developed regions of the West relative the rest of the country. While other economic indicators illustrate a relative positive outlook, this is anticipated to change given the current security situation. The ongoing socio-political crisis is expected to dampen the projected economic growth given that the regions in conflict are vital areas of agriculture production and conflict will increase spending on defense and security<sup>xxxiii</sup>. It is also important to note that militia’s in the west provinces are protesting by prohibiting people from going to work, this is a factor that will play in the decline of the west region’s economic performance.</p>
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<p>Environmental Stress</p> <p>Direction: Stable</p> <p>→</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● - Hectares of Arable Land per person has decreased steadily, from .31 in 2010 to .27 in 2016.<sup>xxxiv</sup></li> <li>● - Freshwater resources per capita has fallen from 12,949 cubic meters in 2012 to 12,275 cubic meters in 2014.<sup>xxxv</sup></li> <li>● - In 2010, Forest Area accounted for 42.1% of Cameroonian Land. By 2016, this number has dropped to 39.1%. Forest Area has been diminishing steadily since at least 1990.<sup>xxxvi</sup></li> <li>● + There does not appear to be a horizontal inequality of access to natural resource wealth intersecting the linguistic disparity. Most of Cameroon's oil is located off the coast of Anglophone regions<sup>xxxvii</sup>. This accounts for 1/12<sup>th</sup> of GDP. The Southern areas of Cameroon receive more rainfall and green than the North.<sup>xxxviii</sup></li> </ul> <p>Risk Assessment: Natural resources and environmental concerns do not take a central role in the Anglophone-Francophone conflict. Cameroon itself is well endowed with natural resources compared with the rest of Africa. While arable land, water, and forest land have been diminishing, they are rarely cited as concerns by the Anglophone community. However, because the Anglophone region has oil reserves, substantial rainfall, and other natural resource endowments, they could potentially become objects of disagreement should the conflict continue to worsen. The presence of favourable environmental conditions and oil wealth could signal to Ambazonian leaders the viability of an independent state. At the same time, natural resource wealth makes the Francophone government even less likely to consider Anglophone secession as a possibility.</p>
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Low Risk

<p>Militarization</p> <p>Direction:</p> <p>↗</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● ± Total military spending has increased in recent years.<sup>xxxix</sup></li> <li>● + However Military spending as a percentage of total spending over the time span of 2010-2017 has decreased from 8.5% to 6.5%.<sup>xl</sup></li> <li>● + According to the World Bank, the percentage of the labour force population in the military was only 0.23 in 2016, following a steady decline from the 2003 number of 0.46.<sup>xli</sup></li> </ul> <p>Risk Assessment: Cameroon is not currently engaging in militarization. However, this could change as the conflict in the Anglophone regions is quite new and growing in intensity. There is no indication that Cameroon fears an attack from any of its neighbors.</p>
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<p>International Linkages</p> <p>Direction:</p> <p>→</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● - 40,000 refugees have fled Western Cameroon into Nigeria. Cameroonian government officials have accused Nigeria of aiding rebels however no serious tensions between the two states have developed.<sup>xlii</sup></li> <li>● + In 2002, Cameroon won an ICJ case against Nigeria recognizing their sovereignty over the oil rich Bakassi Peninsula.<sup>xliii</sup></li> <li>● + Cameroon is well represented in the international arena, as members of the United Nations, African Union, World Health Organization, International Labor Organization, and most other significant international organization.<sup>xliv</sup></li> <li>● - Instability in neighbouring states negatively effects Cameroon. Boko Haram based in Nigeria infiltrate and pose a security threat in the North. Troops have also been deployed to the Eastern border due to increased criminal activity due to spillover from fighting in the Central African Republic.<sup>xlv</sup></li> <li>● ± The United States of America is a military ally to Cameroon in their fight against Boko Haram. Hundreds of American troops assist, advise, and train local forces.<sup>xlvi</sup></li> </ul> <p>Risk Assessment: The international community has been largely silent on the Cameroon crisis. Other global</p>
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	catastrophes are likely higher priorities. The instability in neighbouring countries weakens Cameroon’s ability to effectively manage Anglophone separatist violence. Nigeria has displayed commitment to the federal government in halting Anglophone armed resistance. This is largely a domestic issue, and it appears this will remain the case barring massive international public outcry.
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Internal Stakeholders	
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Paul Biya	Biya, who has ruled Cameroon for 36 years, recently won another 7 year term in office, after a controversial election in October 2018. He established the National Commission on the Promotion of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism, in addition to appointing more Anglophone teachers and magistrates in response to growing protests. These measures were seen as largely symbolic and ineffectual by the Anglophone opposition. <sup>xlvi</sup>
Ambazonian Defence Forces and other Fighting Militias	Led by rebel leader Cho Ayaba, they are of the most active and organized Ambazonian fighting units. They have attacked and killed government forces, and believe armed struggle is the path to an independent Anglophone state in the Northwest and Southwest regions. <sup>xlvi</sup> There is little identifiable structure to the greater group of local militia units, however they continue to attack government forces and enforce Ghost Town initiatives when possible.
The Interim Government of the Federal Republic of Ambazonia	Formerly led by Sisuku Ayuk Tabe, this body succeeded the Ambazonia Governing Council. It is currently led by Samuel Ikome Sako as Acting President. Their mission remains to establish a new independent state called Ambazonia. <sup>xlix</sup>
Maurice Kamto	Kamto was the runner up to Paul Biya in the October 2018 election with 14.23% of the popular vote <sup>i</sup> . He claimed the election process was corrupt and declared himself the winner. In a public address at the end of 2018, he called for Cameroonians to participate in a “White March” protest against violence in the Anglophone regions and government corruption. <sup>ii</sup> This occurred on January 28th. He was arrested with several other protesters. He may continue to align his anti-government stance with the cause of the Anglophone population.

External Stakeholders	
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Nigeria	Over 40,000 Cameroonian refugees have fled into neighbouring Nigeria. The Nigerian government has supported Paul Biya, notably arresting and extraditing over forty Ambazonian rebels, including Sisiku Ayuk Tabe. <sup>lii</sup>
The United States of America	The United States has supported Cameroon militarily in their fight against Boko Haram with soldiers and technological investment. American forces have advised the BIR in their efforts against Ambazonian forces, but it was not proven that they participated in any of the Cameroonian military’s human rights violations. <sup>liii</sup> American soldiers have been criticized for their contribution to violence. On February 6th, The United States announced they will withdraw some military assistance to Cameroon over the allegations of human rights violations in the Anglophone regions. <sup>liv</sup> These cuts specifically target the funding and training of the BIR. The United States government as called for dialogue to stop the violence.

The Cameroonian Anglophone Diaspora	Due to the increased violence and insecurity, many Anglophones have fled the country. The diaspora has taken an active role in the conflict. They contribute to protests against the government by spreading awareness about ongoing civil disobedience tactics, notably the “ghost town” initiatives. <sup>lv</sup> They have also raised money to hire legal services from a US based law firm, Foley Hoag, to bring the case to the international community. <sup>lvi</sup> The Cameroon Government has accused the diaspora of contributing to violence by spreading messages of hatred and terror. <sup>lvii</sup>
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Scenarios	
Best Case	Concerns and distress of the Anglophone population are addressed. The central government takes initiatives such as quotas for Anglophone political representation, providing greater access to Anglophone public officials, and increasing public spending, investment, and autonomy in the Northwest and Southwest regions. As a result, the Anglophones address their initial grievances that led to the unrest and halt all protests and insurgencies.
Worst Case	Ambazonians unite and consolidate armed forces, take control of territory, natural resources, ports and establish an independent state. The central government of Cameroon will likely retaliate, leading to a civil war that causes significant casualties, destruction of infrastructure and economic depression.
Most Likely	The Ambazonian movement is fractured with several different militias and no clear centralized authority. Their government forces will most likely continue to repress sporadic protests. Given that the conflict is still relatively small and contained, the government has no incentive to take further action to address the cause of conflict and discontent of the Anglophone population. There are political grievances but they are not dire enough to bring upon a full fledged civil war or constitutional reforms.

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