

DR. CAROLINE LUCAS

Green Party
for the South East of England

Commissioner Ferrero Waldner
DG External Relations
The European Commission
200 Rue de la Loi
B1049 Brussels
Belgium

March 26th 2008

Dear Commissioner,

The EU's partnership with Cameroon is based on respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law. Historically there have been good economic and trade relations, as well as EU aid donations to Cameroon.

However, it would appear that Cameroon is failing to meet its obligations under the agreements with the EU. President Biya is in the process of amending the constitution so as to allow him to extend his rule beyond 2011, when it should come to an end. The levels of corruption in Cameroon are regularly flagged by Transparency International, who rates the government amongst the top 4 corrupt regimes worldwide. Work the Medical Aid Foundation has done with Amnesty International reveals:

Methods of torture known to be practised in Cameroon include 'balancoire' (suspension); 'bastinade' - beating on the soles of the feet; beating with truncheons, the flat of a machete, sticks, whips or lengths of tyre tread; electrical torture; cigarette and other burns; and being forced to crawl or walk barefoot over sharp objects.

The Medical Aid Foundation also note:

Cameroon is an active member of the UN where its voting record suggests a commitment to international peacekeeping and the rule of law. In reality, there remains a high degree of impunity for human rights violators in Cameroon. Some extrajudicial killings and arbitrary detentions have been investigated and/or punished. But of the several hundred extrajudicial executions committed by security forces reported in 2000, none was investigated.

Recent protests in the country about the rising cost of fuel and food, as well as President Biya's constitutional plans, resulted in the death of around 20 people.

Cameroonians in the UK fear there is a risk of civil war and have asked me to call on the EU to intervene. I would, therefore, urge you to express opposition to President Biya's plans to extend his rule and give your support to free, fair and open elections. I would also ask the Commissioner to use the EU's agreements with Cameroon to place pressure on the authorities to genuinely respect human rights, as well as democratic principles and the rule of law.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Caroline Lucas". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Caroline Lucas - Green Party MEP for South East England.