

Saturday, April 22, 2017

Dear friends of the people of Cameroon.

Please pray for justice, reconciliation and peace in Cameroon.

Seven church leaders, including the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon, have been summoned to appear in court on Monday, April 24, 2017, to answer charges arising out of intensifying protests over the perceived marginalization of Cameroon's English-speaking minority.

Tensions have been escalating in the bi-lingual state since October 2016, when the country's Anglophone lawyers launched a series of strikes to demand English translations of key legal documents and better treatment by French-speaking officials. The following month, teachers' unions in the country's two predominantly English-speaking provinces joined the protests, disrupting classes and causing many schools to close.

Cameroon was seized by Germany as a colony in 1884. At the end of World War I, it was split into two territories, under the control of France and Britain. After both colonies regained independence in the early 1960s, they reunited, initially as a federal republic and later as a unitary state. Less than 20% of the population speak English as the primary international language, but as much as 60% of the nation's natural resources are believed to be located in the two predominantly Anglophone provinces.

In an effort to quell political protests in the region, including a series of coordinated business closures designed to turn urban centers into "ghost towns," the government had reportedly shut down internet access in the two provinces. Officials have also tried to break strikes and compel schools to reopen. The legal action against the church leaders appears to be part of this effort. They are being charged, among other things, with failing to ensure that classes take place after accepting school fees.



Please pray that Cameroon's public officials and judicial officers will deal justly, wisely and compassionately with the concerns being raised by Anglophone Cameroonians, so that a spirit of unity and cooperation may be restored and all of the country's citizens may enjoy fully their civil and human rights. Please pray particularly for the leaders of the Presbyterian Church of Cameroon, the Roman Catholic Church of Cameroon and the Cameroon Baptist Convention as they appear in court to defend the actions of their respective churches.

Peace of Christ be with you and with our sisters and brothers in Cameroon.



Rev. Denise Anderson  
Co-Moderator, Presbyterian Church USA



Rev. Jose Luis Casal  
Director, World Mission



Rev. Debbie Braaksma  
Africa Coordinator, World Mission



Mr. Jeff Boyd  
Regional Liaison for Central Africa

## Prayer for Cameroon

Creator God –

We give thanks that you have created us as unique individuals, people who share a wonderful variety of languages, cultures and ethnicities.

Gracious God, we also ask you to provide our church and ecumenical partners in Cameroon with the guidance, strength and courage to continue to speak truth to power, to build bridges of reconciliation and to stand against all violations of civil rights. We are thankful that you walk with your people through time of trouble, comforting and protecting those who are vulnerable. Help us to faithfully support our partners' peace-building efforts, to pray and advocate on their behalf and to learn from their brave witness as we face increasing attacks on the dignity of people in our own country.

In the name of the Prince of Peace we pray.

Amen

