

Acknowledgements

We wish to place on record our deep appreciation to the many persons and individuals who assisted us in a variety of ways during our mission. We have been particularly touched by the hospitality of the people of Cameroon who warmly welcomed us wherever we went. We wish them well in their efforts to achieve a fully democratic society.

We wish to express our appreciation to the Vice-Prime Minister responsible for Territorial Administration and the officials of the Ministry; the President of the Supreme Court; and to the officials of the Ministry of External Relations for giving so generously of their time. We also wish to thank the political parties, the various Cameroonian interest groups and non-governmental organisations, and representatives of the media, whose briefings greatly assisted us in our work.

Our thanks also go to the Commonwealth High Commissions in Yaoundé and other members of the diplomatic community for the many courtesies extended to us.

We wish to extend our appreciation to the Commonwealth Secretary-General, Chief Emeka Anyaoku, for his support and for providing us with the opportunity to participate in this mission – which was a further expression of the Commonwealth's commitment to promoting democracy.

Finally, we would like to express our warm thanks to the staff of the Commonwealth Secretariat who accompanied us on our mission, and whose efficient support played such an important role in its accomplishment.

Annexes

ANNEX I

Composition of the Commonwealth Observer Group

The Hon Jean-Jacques Blais, PC, QC (Chairperson – Canada)

The Hon Jean-Jacques Blais held several ministerial positions in the Government of Canada, the last being Minister of National Defence, until 1984. He was first elected to the House of Commons in 1972. Mr Blais now practises law in Ottawa where he advises clients on public administration and government relations. From 1984-91, as a Privy Councillor, Mr Blais was a member of the Security Intelligence Review Committee, reporting to Parliament on the activities of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service. He also chairs the Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies and the Lester B Pearson International Peacekeeping Centre. Mr Blais has served on several Commonwealth observer missions, the most recent being to the general election in Pakistan in February 1997.

Mr Frank Abdulah (Trinidad and Tobago)

Mr Frank Abdulah completed his diplomatic career in November 1988 after serving as Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Prior to this, he was High Commissioner in London with concurrent accreditation to several European capitals. Mr Abdulah was Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York from 1975-82, and among the positions which he held whilst at the UN was Chairman of the Committee of 24 – the Decolonisation Committee – from 1980-82. He was appointed Deputy Secretary-General of the Caribbean Community (Caricom) in 1989 and served in this capacity until 1993. Following his retirement, he has been involved in a number of human resource development projects and is currently president of the UN Association of Trinidad and Tobago. Mr Abdulah read Modern Languages at Magdalen College, Oxford.

The Hon Margaret Alva, MP (India)

A Member of Parliament since 1974, the Hon Margaret Alva was a Minister of State in the Central Government for ten years. A lawyer by profession, she has practised at the Supreme Court of India. As chairperson of the core group set up by the Government of India in 1989, Mrs Alva presented the National Perspective Plan for Women's Development and also served as chairperson of the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) Technical Committee on Women for two years. She was a member of the expert group formed by the Women's Division of the UN to assess the impact of the Women's Decade on 'Women in Decision Making', and on the panel of eminent persons constituted by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) to advise on a policy for human resource development for Asia and the Pacific. Mrs Alva was a member of the special advisory group of the UN Family Planning Association established as a follow-up to the Cairo Conference on Population. She currently serves as a member of both the Public Accounts Committee and the Foreign Affairs Committee of Parliament.

Mr Charles Chadwick, CBE (Britain)

After military service and graduating from the University of Toronto, Mr Charles Chadwick spent nine years with the overseas civil service in Zambia where his last post was Head of Administrative Training at the Staff Training College in Lusaka. He then joined the British Council, serving in Kenya, Nigeria, Brazil and London, and latterly as Director in Canada and Poland. He has observed elections for the Commonwealth in Ghana (1992) and Pakistan (1993), and for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in Uganda. He was a Provincial Supervisor for the independence elections in Zimbabwe and in 1994 was regional co-ordinator in Kwazulu/Natal for the European Union Election Observers in South Africa. He was also an elections Supervisor for the OSCE for the 1996 elections in Bosnia.

The Hon Kenneth Dzirasah, MP (Ghana)

The Hon Kenneth Dzirasah has been a Member of Parliament in Ghana since January 1993. Following his election as First Deputy Speaker in May 1994, he has chaired the Appointments Committee and the Privileges Committee of the House. He was chairman of the Constitutional, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs Committee of Parliament from 1993-95. A lawyer by profession, Mr Dzirasah was called to the Ghana Bar in October 1980, and practised law as a solicitor and advocate of the Supreme Court of Ghana until being elected to Parliament. Mr Dzirasah holds a Bachelor of Arts (Law and Sociology) honours degree from the University of Ghana, Legon, and a Barrister's Certificate from the Ghana School of Law. He was one time senior research writer of the *Weekly Spectator*, a Ghanaian national weekly newspaper and also served as the paper's Features Editor. In 1994, he served as a United Nations observer to the elections in South Africa.

Mrs Charmaine Gardner (St Lucia)

Mrs Charmaine Gardner served as Deputy President of the St Lucia Senate from 1987-96. She has also been a member of the Advisory Task Force to Caribbean Heads of Government on 'Caribbean Development to the Year 2000' and member of the Prime Minister's delegation on several missions. Mrs Gardner is also the managing director of Carasco & Son Ltd, St Lucia, and vice-president of the Caribbean Association of Industry and Commerce. She has served as president of the St Lucia Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture, a board member of the St Lucia Broadcasting Corporation, and private sector representative to the EU-ACP meetings which negotiated the Lomé II, III and IV agreements. She is presently on the Board of Governors of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College and is a council member of the University of the West Indies (Cave Hill) and chairperson of the Housing and Urban Development Corporation of St Lucia. Mrs Gardner was educated at St Joseph's Convent, St Lucia, Jarvis Collegiate, Toronto, and holds a Bachelor of Arts degree (Sociology and Philosophy) from the University of Western Ontario.

Mrs Trudy Gibson (Canada)

Mrs Trudy Gibson is an Election Consultant. She has been involved in elections since she was a candidate at the provincial level in the early 1970s. In 1974, she served as a federal returning officer, and from 1977-92 as an electoral administrator at Elections Canada. Mrs Gibson joined the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia from July 1992 to July 1993 as an election administrator. Subsequently, she has been a consultant in Uganda and in Kiev, and did observation work in Uganda and Tanzania. She was educated at Mount Allison University and Ottawa University.

Mr Selwyn Jones (St Vincent and the Grenadines)

Mr Selwyn Jones is Supervisor of Elections of St Vincent and the Grenadines and is responsible for voter registration and organising all elections in that country. He was previously Deputy Supervisor of Elections and a Registering Officer in conjunction with his substantive post as Project Manager in the Ministry of Education. He worked as a Presiding Officer at two general elections and as a Returning Officer on three occasions. He was educated at the St Lucia Technical Teachers' College and Huddersfield Polytechnic, Britain.

Mr M M Rezaul Karim (Bangladesh)

A retired career diplomat and educated at Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, USA, Mr Rezaul Karim was Bangladesh High Commissioner to Britain and Sri Lanka, and Ambassador to China, the Soviet Union, Iran and Iraq. He was the Secretary to Government before his retirement in 1992 and has since worked as an expert on rural poverty alleviation. Mr Karim participated as a delegate to five Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings and

attended many UN and international conferences, including sessions of the UN General Assembly, summits of the Non-Aligned Movement, Organisation of the Islamic Conference and SAARC. He acted as an International Observer at the parliamentary elections in Sri Lanka in 1994. Mr Karim is at present a freelance newspaper columnist and a member of the Advisory Council of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP).

The Hon Mamagana-Malose Anna Nyama, MP (South Africa)

The Hon M M A Nyama is usually called 'Koti' Nyama. She is a member of the Northern Provincial Legislature in the Republic of South Africa and is currently Deputy Speaker in the Legislature. She chairs the Internal Arrangements Committee of the Legislature and sits on the Rules Committee. A teacher by profession, she was a lecturer at a teachers' training college before joining the Provincial Legislature. Ms Nyama was on the government delegation to the UN Beijing Conference on women and takes a keen interest in women's emancipation issues. She observed elections in Mozambique as an AWEPA delegate in 1994.

The Hon Daivanaden Poinoosawmy, MP (Mauritius)

The Hon Daivanaden Poinoosawmy has been a member of the National Executive of the Mauritius Labour Party since 1980. He has been active in trade union and youth organisations in Mauritius, especially in the rural areas. He is one of the founding members of the Mauritius Graduates' Union. He has held senior executive positions in three multinational textile companies. He was elected to serve as a Member of the National Assembly in December 1995.

Mr Bernardin Renaud (Seychelles)

Mr Bernardin Renaud is a practising barrister and attorney-at-law in the Supreme Court of Seychelles. He is a member of the Board of Examiners for the admission examination of barristers. He has been in the public sector since 1965, and was the Labour Commissioner, Chairman of the Port Labour Board, and Chairman of the Occupational Health and Safety Board from 1980-86. Mr Renaud has been involved in electoral and constitutional activities in Seychelles in various capacities. He was the Chief Electoral Officer for the elections to the Constitutional Commission in July 1992; Legal Secretary of the Constitutional Commission in September 1992; and Chief Electoral Officer for the Referendum in November 1992. He has been Registrar of Political Parties since February 1993. From January to May 1993, he was the Chairman of the Seychelles Constitutional Commission and was the Director of Elections for the first Presidential and National Assembly elections in July 1993. Since 1989, Mr Renaud has been chairman of the Apex Organisation of NGOs, and was the head of delegation to the Commonwealth NGO Forum in Zimbabwe in 1991. He served as a member of the International Observer Group of French-speaking Parliamentarians to Senegal in 1993, and in the same year as a Commonwealth observer to the elections in Pakistan. He was a UN consultant on the feasibility of holding elections in Liberia in 1994. Mr Renaud was educated in Seychelles, Kenya, Britain and Tanzania. He has been the National Ombudsman in Seychelles since November 1993.

SECRETARIAT SUPPORT STAFF

Mr J P Sheppard, Team Leader

Mr R Nzerem, Assistant to Observers

Ms S Pepera, Assistant to Observers

Ms N John, Assistant to Observers

Ms A Yeboah-Afari, Media Liaison and Assistant to Observers

Ms M Roberts, Assistant to Observers

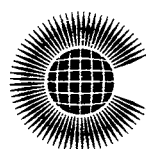
Ms L McLaren, Assistant to Observers

Mr P Ramgulam, Assistant to Observers

Mrs G Mason, Administrative Officer

ANNEX II

Commonwealth News Release of 7 May 1997



Commonwealth News Release

97/20

7 May 1997

Commonwealth to Observe Parliamentary Elections in Cameroon

A team of 13 Commonwealth Observers, together with a supporting team from the Commonwealth Secretariat, will be present in Cameroon for the elections to the National Assembly which are to be held there on 17 May 1997.

In making this announcement today, Commonwealth Secretary-General Chief Emeka Anyaoku said that the Commonwealth was responding to a request from the Government of the Republic of Cameroon for a Commonwealth Group to observe the parliamentary elections. An Assessment Mission from the Commonwealth Secretariat, which visited Cameroon in April, established that there was widespread political support for a Commonwealth presence during the elections.

The Commonwealth Observer Group to Cameroon will be led by the **Hon Jean-Jacques Blais**, a former Minister in the Canadian Government. The other observers will be:

Mr Frank Abdulah Former Diplomat	Trinidad and Tobago
Hon Margaret Alva Member of Parliament	India
Mr Charles Chadwick Former Public Servant	Britain
Hon Kenneth Dzirasah Member of Parliament and First Deputy Speaker	Ghana
Senator Charmaine Gardner Former Deputy President of the Senate	St Lucia
Ms Trudy Gibson Electoral Expert	Canada

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Marlborough House, Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5HX, Britain.
Tel: 0171-747 6385/6; Fax: 0171-839 9081; Telex: 27678*

Mr Selwyn Jones Supervisor of Elections	St Vincent and the Grenadines
Mr M M Rezaul Karim Former Diplomat	Bangladesh
Mr Masing R Lauru Electoral Commissioner	Vanuatu
Hon M M A Nyama Deputy Speaker Northern Provincial Legislature	South Africa
Hon Daivanaden Poinoosawmy Member of Parliament	Mauritius
Mr Bernardin Renaud Ombudsman and former Chief Electoral Officer	Seychelles

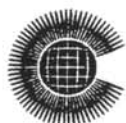
The Group will be supported by a nine-member team from the Commonwealth Secretariat, led by Mr Jon Sheppard, Director of the Political Affairs Division.

Note to Editors: The mission to Cameroon will be the 21st election observer mission mounted by the Commonwealth since October 1990; the most recent of which was in Pakistan in February. The observer missions are to be seen in the context of a decision taken by Commonwealth Heads of Government to support the promotion of democracy in a number of ways, including the observation, on request, of elections in member states.

Cameroon joined the Commonwealth as its 52nd member state on 1 November 1995. This will be the first time that the Commonwealth has observed elections in that country.

ANNEX III

Arrival Statement of 9 May 1997



Cameroon Parliamentary Election, 1997

Commonwealth Observer Group

News Release

Arrival Statement by the Commonwealth Observer Group

We are pleased to be here in Cameroon at this important time. We have come in response to a request from the Government of Cameroon to the Commonwealth Secretary-General, Chief Emeka Anyaoku, for the Commonwealth to observe the Parliamentary Elections on 17 May 1997. In recent consultations with the Commonwealth Secretariat, this request was endorsed by all the major political parties involved in the elections.

Our Group has been drawn from 12 Commonwealth countries. We each serve in our personal capacities and not as representatives of the countries, governments or the organisations to which we may belong. Our objective is to observe the organisation and conduct of the elections in accordance with the laws of Cameroon, and to register our views on the process based upon our observations.

We have no executive role. On completion of our task we will present a report to the Commonwealth Secretary-General, who will make it available to the Government of Cameroon and to the political parties taking part in the elections, and thereafter to all Commonwealth governments.

* Nous considérons notre rôle durant les élections législatives comme étant une partie essentielle de l'engagement du Commonwealth de renforcer le processus démocratique chez ses états membres. Durant l'exercice de notre mandat, nous aurons des échanges avec les parties politiques, le Ministère de l'Administration du Territoire auquel est confié l'organisation des élections ainsi qu'avec d'autres intéressés à l'exercice en cours. Nous anticipons avec intérêt être informé quant aux préparatifs pour la tenue des élections et nous nous disperserons vers les diverses régions du pays et avant et après le 17 mai prochain pour poursuivre nos activités.

* We consider our role in observing these elections as part of the Commonwealth's commitment to strengthening the democratic process in member countries. In carrying out this mission we will remain in close touch with the political parties, the Ministry of Territorial Administration which is responsible for organising the election, and others involved in the election exercise. We look forward to being briefed on the preparations for the poll, and to travelling to many parts of the country before and on polling day.

We would like to thank the Commonwealth Secretary-General for placing his confidence in us, and for the tremendous support he has already shown to our assignment. We view his recent consultations with the President, Government and Opposition Leaders, and our presence here as observers, as a clear indication of the Commonwealth's sincere commitment to supporting Cameroon's democratisation process.

We particularly look forward to a happy collaboration with the ACCT Group of Observers. As the Secretary-General informed you yesterday, this is the first time that the Commonwealth will have worked so closely with another international observer group and this is a manifestation of the priority that the Commonwealth gives to consensus-building.

We consider it an honour to be here at this juncture and hope to assist in whatever ways we can in Cameroon's political and democratic development.

Hilton Hotel
Yaoundé
9 May 1997

The Commonwealth Observer Group Media Liaison Officer is Ms Ajoa Yeboah-Afari, who can be contacted at the Commonwealth Observer Group Office, Essingan A on Level 01 of the Hilton Hotel, Yaoundé. Tel No: 23 36 46 x 1175

ANNEX IV

Schedule of Engagements

Thursday 8 May

- 1850 Arrival at Nsimalen International Airport, Yaoundé, followed by meeting with the Commonwealth Secretary-General, Chief Emeka Anyaoku, at the VIP Lounge

Friday 9 May

- 1000 Arrival Press Conference, Hilton Hotel, Yaoundé
- 1100 Briefing by Directors of the Ministry of Territorial Administration: Dr P Ngwese-Ngolle (Organisation), Mr E Eban-Otong (Political Affairs), Mr M Hgabe (Legal Affairs) and Dr E Essousse (Deputy-Director, Elections)
- 1500 Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (CPDM): Mr G Owona (Deputy Secretary-General) and Dr F Azu'u (Member, Central Committee)
- 1800 Briefing by the diplomatic community, hosted by Mr Peter Broom, British Deputy High Commissioner

Saturday 10 May

- 0730 Briefing by Mr Akere Muna, President of the Cameroon Bar Association
- 0830 Social Democratic Front (SDF): Mr Suleyman Muhammet (Vice-President), Alhadji Sani (Chairman of Central Province) and others
- 1000 Representatives of the *Union Nationale pour la Démocratie et le Progrès* (UNDP)
- 1130 Briefing by Dr Solomon Nfor Gwei (Chairperson, National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms) and Justice (Mrs) Lucy Gwanmesia (Member, NCHRF)
- 1545 Briefing by representatives of the Association of Women Jurists (ACAFEJ)
- 1700 Briefing by Mr Herbert Boh, Secretary-General, Union of Journalists of Cameroon, and colleagues
- 1900 Chairperson's Reception

Sunday 11 May

- 1030 Deployment briefing
- 1800 Political party rally in Yaoundé

Monday 12 May

- 0900 Representatives of the *Union Démocratique du Cameroun* (UDC)

1000 Call by group of Observers on Justice Dipanda Mouelle, President of the Supreme Court

Tour by group of Observers of Yaoundé divisions to view the process of distribution of voters' cards

Tuesday 13 May

Deployment Day

1000 Chairperson's meeting with the Hon Gilbert Andze Tsoungui, Vice-Prime Minister responsible for Territorial Administration, and senior directors, MINAT

Wednesday 14 - Thursday 15 May

Visit by Chairperson and Secretariat Team Leader to North-West Province

Field observation in deployment areas

Saturday 17 May

Observation of Poll and Count on Polling Day

Sunday 18 May

Return from deployment to Yaoundé

Monday 19 May

0900 Debriefing and consideration of draft report

1230 Debriefing and exchange with the ACCT Observer Group, hosted by the French Ambassador

1630 Continuation of debriefing and consideration of draft report

1930 Observers' Press Conference – Interim Statement

2030 Dinner hosted by the Canadian High Commissioner

Tuesday 20 May

Continued consideration of draft report

Wednesday 21 May

Continued consideration and finalisation of draft report

- 1830 Reception for the Commonwealth Observer Group hosted by the Hon Peter Musonge, Prime Minister of Cameroon

Thursday 22 May

- 0830 Finalisation of Report

Issue of Departure Statement

- 1700 Farewell Reception for the International Observers hosted by the Hon Gilbert Andze Tsoungui

Departure from Yaoundé

23 - 29 May

Two observers, Mr Frank Abdulah (Trinidad and Tobago) and Ms Trudy Gibson (Canada), plus Secretariat support staff, remain in Yaoundé to follow the proceedings of the National Commission for the Final Counting of Votes and the Supreme Court with regard to the compilation and proclamation of results

ANNEX V**Statement on the Deployment of Commonwealth Observers, 12 May 1997**

Cameroon Parliamentary Election, 1997

Commonwealth Observer Group*News Release*

12 May 1997

Commonwealth Observer Groups Deploy to the Regions

The 12-member Commonwealth Observer Group in Cameroon leaves Yaoundé tomorrow, 13 May, for the regions. The observers, assisted by staff of the Commonwealth Secretariat, will be deployed in teams to the 10 provinces of Cameroon where they will observe the last days of the campaign and the preparations for the Parliamentary Election on Saturday, 17 May.

Since its arrival in the country on 8 May, the Group has held meetings with a wide cross-section of society, including the Ministry of Territorial Administration, which is responsible for organising the election, political parties, human rights organisations, professional associations, and other non-governmental bodies. The Commonwealth Observers will be working in close co-operation with observers from L'Agence de Co-operation Culturelle et Technique (ACCT) based in Paris.

The Group will be deployed as follows:

Central Region	Hon Jean-Jacques Blais (Chairman) Mr Jon Sheppard Mrs Gina Mason
Far North	Hon Daivanaden Poinosawmy Ms Lorna McLaren
North	Hon Kenneth Dzirasah Mr Prakash Ramgulam
Amadaoua	Mr Bernadin Renaud Mrs Charmaine Gardner
East	Mrs Trudy Gibson Mr Richard Nzerem

South	Mr Selwyn Jones Ms Ajoa Yeboah-Afari
Littoral	Mr M M Rezaul Karim Ms Noreen John
West	Mr Frank Abdulah Ms Maryse Roberts
South West	Hon Margaret Alva Ms Sandra Pepera
North West	Mrs M A Nyama Mr Charles Chadwick

Note to editors:

The Commonwealth Observers will depart from the Yaoundé Hilton Hotel at 7. 30 a.m. tomorrow, 13 May. The media is invited to cover the departure.



Cameroon Parliamentary Election, 1997

Commonwealth Observer Group

DEPLOYMENT					
ACCOMMODATION					
No.	Region	Name of Observer	Location	Name of Hotel	Telephone No.
1.	Littoral	Mr M M Rezaul Karim Ms Noreen John	Douala	Le Meridien	42 90 44
2.	South West	Hon Margaret Alva Ms Sandra Pepera	Buea	Mountain Hotel	c/o Christopher Ekungwe, Soweda 32 22 06
3.	North West	Hon Ms M A Nyama Mr Charles Chadwick	Bamenda	Hotel Ayaba	36 13 21/ 36 13 56
4.	Amadaoua	Mr Bernardin Renaud Mrs Charmaine Gardner	Ngaoundere	Hotel Transcam	25 10 41 Fax: 25 12 52
5.	Far North	Hon Daivanaden Poinosawmy Ms Lorna McLaren	Maroua	Mizao Hotel	29 13 04
6.	North	Hon Kenneth Dzirasah Mr Prakash Ramgulam	Garoua	Relais St Hubert	27 30 33
7.	East	Mrs Trudy Gibson Mr Richard Nzerem	Bertoua	Mansa Hotel	24 16 50/ 24 14 96 Fax: 24 15 88
8.	West	Mr Frank Abdulah Ms Maryse Roberts	Bafoussam	Tal Motel Touristique	44 41 85/ 44 61 81
9.	South	Mr Selwyn Jones Ms Ajoa Yeboah-Afari	Ebolowa	Hotel Le Ranch	28 35 32 Fax: 28 49 34
10.	Centre	Chairman Mr Jon Sheppard Mrs Gina Mason	Yaoundé	Hilton Hotel	23 36 46 (Office extn. 1175/1176) Fax: 22 32 10

Hilton Yaoundé • Boulevard du 20 Mai • BP 11852 • Yaoundé • Cameroon
Tel: (237) 23 36 46 • Fax: (237) 22 32 10

11 May 1997

ANNEX VI**Observation Notes for Poll and Count and Check List for Polling Station Visits**

Cameroon Parliamentary Election, 1997

Commonwealth Observer Group**OBSERVATION NOTES FOR POLL AND COUNT****PART A**

The Observers may focus particular attention on the following aspects of the conduct of the election:

THE CAMPAIGN

1. Balance of TV/radio election coverage and extent and nature of access by the parties (e.g. allocation of time for political broadcasts and advertisements).
2. Print media: nature of coverage and extent of access by the political parties.
3. The tone and content of material put out by the political parties, access to printing facilities?
4. The conduct of political meetings/rallies (permits for public meetings?)
5. The conduct of house-to-house canvassing of voters.
6. Nature, scale and effectiveness of Election management body and other voter education on radio and television, in the print media and by other methods.
7. Activities/measures to encourage the participation of women.
8. Access to funds and sources of funds.
9. Has there been violence/intimidation and/or tolerance and restraint?
10. In general, has the campaign been conducted according to standard democratic norms?
11. Have there been any barriers to travel by Party leaders and activists?
12. Have political rallies and other activities been permitted when/as requested?

THE POLL

1. Location of polling centres
2. Instances of potential voters turned away for alleged irregularities, and the nature of such problems.
3. Distances travelled by voters to polling centres, particularly in rural areas.
4. The procedure followed at the opening of the poll.
5. The length of time voters wait to cast their votes.
6. The adequacy or otherwise of facilities at polling stations and their state of readiness.
7. Availability of adequate supplies, e.g. ballot papers, official stamps and stamp-pads, indelible ink, etc.
8. The performance of electoral officials at the polling centres/booths visited.
9. The procedures in place to ensure proper security of ballot papers, ballot boxes and official seals.
10. Arrangements to facilitate voting by women.
11. The steps taken to ensure that the secrecy of the ballot is assured.
12. The measures taken to ensure the security of discarded ballots.
13. The general atmosphere at the polling centres/booths visited.
14. Access of party agents and observers to polling centres and the performance of party agents.
15. Presence and activities of gendarmerie and/or other security forces.

THE COUNT

1. Inspection of seals.
2. The process of reconciling the number of people who voted with the number of ballots cast.
3. The determination of invalid ballots.

4. The facilities for candidates and their representatives to witness and verify the count and overall transparency.
5. Access by domestic and international observers.
6. Transport of polling station materials to constituency level.
7. Procedures at constituency level.
8. The conduct of electoral officers.
9. The collation and transmission of results information to constituency and higher levels.
10. The sealing, security and transportation of ballot boxes with used ballots, to constituency level.

PART B

Questions that may be put:

BEFORE POLLING DAY

1. Was the Voters' Register compiled in a satisfactory way? Were people missed out? If so, what remedial measures were in place? Were the names of dead people or "phantom voters" included? Were citizens denied registration on dubious grounds?
2. What difficulties have been experienced in registering to vote?
3. What problems have been encountered by parties in registering candidates?
4. Was the Register easily available for public scrutiny?
5. Did registered voters experience difficulty obtaining their Voters' Identity Cards or being included on the register?
6. Who are the election officials? How were they chosen? Are voters confident that they will be impartial?
7. Is the person in the street satisfied with arrangements? Will he/she vote? If not, is he/she afraid to do so? Were there any attempts to discourage/encourage the participation of women and were they effective?

8. Have all parties been able to campaign freely? Has the campaign been free of intimidation, etc? Have all parties had full access to the mass media?
9. Is there freedom to advertise and distribute posters, leaflets, etc?

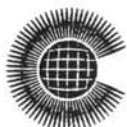
ON POLLING DAY

1. Before polling starts, are the ballot boxes empty? Are they properly sealed? Are all procedures being adhered to?
2. Are all parties represented at polling stations? Are they satisfied with the process?
3. Are voters apparently voting freely? Are they enthusiastic? Do they talk freely? Do they exhibit signs of fear or intimidation?
4. Do voters and election officials understand the procedures properly? If not, are the procedures being explained fully and impartially? Are attempts being made to suggest how voters should vote?
5. Does the turnout indicate that women have been deterred from voting?
6. Is only one person at a time being allowed into the voting booth?
7. How long are voters waiting to vote? If a long time, are some being put off? Is there queue jumping?
8. Will all parties be represented at polling centres throughout voting and count? Are party polling agents adequately trained and vigilant?
9. Will foreign observers have free access to all stages of the process?
10. Is the security presence effective/oppressive?

THE COUNT

1. Are the boxes kept safe until opened? Are all parties present at opening?
2. Does the number of used ballot papers tally with the record of those who voted?

3. Are the papers counted properly? Are counting agents present? Are they satisfied with the procedure of the count? Is the collation and transmission of results being carried out properly?
4. What happens to the unused ballots?
5. What are the procedures at the constituency level?
6. Observe the collation of polling station returns.



Cameroon Parliamentary Election, 1997

Commonwealth Observer Group

CHECKLIST FOR POLLING STATION VISITS

Name of Observer(s):

Constituency:

Polling Station:

Time of Arrival:

Time of Departure:

Voters in Queue: Rate of Processing:

- | | | | | |
|----|--|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. | Opening of Poll: | On time?
No/Yes
Details | Procedures followed?
No/Yes | |
| 2. | Layout and
Facilities: | Good? | Adequate? | Poor? |
| 3. | Polling Staff: | Efficient? | Satisfactory? | Poor? |
| 4. | Security Presence: | Discreet? | Intrusive? | Oppressive? |
| 5. | Complaints by Party
Polling Agents: | No/Yes | Details: | |
| 6. | Complaints by
Voters: | No/Yes | Details: | |

- | | | | | |
|-----|---|---------------------------------|-------------------------|------------|
| 7. | Presence of
Unauthorised
persons: | No/Yes | Details: | |
| 8. | Atmosphere at
Station | Orderly | Tense? | Chaotic? |
| 9. | Secrecy of Ballot: | Assured? | Poor? | Uncertain? |
| 10. | Voting | | | |
| | (a) Personation attempts alleged: | | No/Yes | |
| | Details: | | | |
| | (b) Multiple voting attempts alleged: | | No/Yes | |
| | Details: | | | |
| | (c) Women deterred from voting: | | No/Yes | |
| | Details: | | | |
| 11. | Closing of Poll: | On time?
Procedure followed? | Numbers still in queue? | Yes/No |
| 12. | The Count: | Are procedures being observed? | | Yes/No |
| 13. | Apparent fairness overall: | Good? | Acceptable? | |
| 14. | Other Comments: | | | |

ANNEX VII**Interim Statement of 19 May 1997**

Cameroon Parliamentary Election, 1997

Commonwealth Observer Group*News Release*

19 May 1997

**Interim Statement by the Hon Jean-Jacques Blais PC QC,
Chairman of the Commonwealth Observer Group**

The Commonwealth Observer Group arrived in the Republic of Cameroon on 8 May 1997. The Group consists of twelve members drawn from the ranks of experienced parliamentarians, electoral officials and eminent persons from across the Commonwealth, supported by a team of nine staff from the Commonwealth Secretariat in London.

In the week leading up to the national elections, the Group was thoroughly briefed by representatives of the Ministry of Territorial Administration, the governing party and opposition parties, the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms, Cameroonian professional associations and non-governmental organisations, and individuals with an interest in the political process. On 13 and 14 May our observers deployed throughout Cameroon to every province where they again met with regional governmental and political representatives. We have liaised closely with observers from other organisations, notably from La Francophonie.

On election day, members of our Group visited 350 polling stations across the country. Our teams observed the opening of the polls, the casting of votes, the closure of the polls, the counting of ballots at polling stations and the despatch of Counting Returns (Procès Verbaux) to Divisional Supervisory Commissions.

Utilising our own resources, we have been unrestricted in our ability to move around the country. Our conclusions are entirely our own.

We acknowledge the steps being taken by the Government of Cameroon to develop multiparty democracy in this country, and we recognise the importance of this election in that regard.

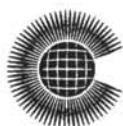
The holding of multiparty elections for the 180 seats in the National Assembly is a major undertaking. It requires skilled planning and administration, as well as the establishment of a viable legal framework. It also requires co-operation and co-ordination amongst all the interested parties. We recognise the progress that has been made by the Government of Cameroon in satisfying these requirements, although more needs to be done before the next phase of the electoral process.

We received many representations critical of the preparations for the 17 May poll, especially in regard to the registration process; other problems in the conduct of the election were also apparent to us. However, our observation of the actual polling substantiated our faith in the commitment of the people of Cameroon to the democratic process.

At the time of this statement, results of the election have not been announced. While we also recognise that measures have been taken to enhance the consensual basis of the electoral process, we are concerned that the framework which allows a maximum period of 20 days for the final declaration of the polls entails much delay, and may undermine the confidence of the electorate. We will continue to monitor the situation until the results of the elections are finally proclaimed by the Supreme Court.

Our final Report will benefit from further widespread consultations and careful analysis. It will be submitted in the first instance to the Commonwealth Secretary-General, who will then transmit copies to the Government of Cameroon and the political parties participating in the elections.

The final Report will contain a number of specific observations and recommendations aimed at helping Cameroon in the further development of its evolving democracy, including the creation of an independent electoral commission.

ANNEX VIII**Departure Statement of 22 May 1997**

Cameroon Parliamentary Election, 1997

Commonwealth Observer Group*News Release***22 May 1997****Departure Statement by the Hon Jean-Jacques Blais PC QC,
Chairman of the Commonwealth Observer Group**

It is usual for Commonwealth Observer teams to issue a statement on departure. However, in issuing this statement, we wish to underline that given the specific circumstances surrounding the Cameroon Parliamentary election held on 17 May 1997, some observers will be remaining here until the process has been completed.

The Commonwealth Observer Group wishes to express its gratitude to the Government and people of Cameroon for their hospitality and co-operation during our mission in Cameroon. We are happy to have been given the opportunity to be present during this important phase in the evolution of multiparty democracy in Cameroon, and for the first general election since Cameroon joined the Commonwealth. We look forward to more of such co-operation.

Our 21-member Group arrived on 8 May, and we leave today, 22 May. During our stay in Cameroon, we met with a wide range of citizens, officials and party representatives. On election day we visited 350 polling stations all over the country and observed all aspects of the poll. We issued an Interim Statement on 19 May, and our final report will be submitted to the Commonwealth Secretary-General, Chief Emeka Anyaoku, who will make it available to the Government of Cameroon, all the political parties which participated in the election, as well as the general public.

ANNEX IX

Sample Ballot Papers

REPUBLIQUE DU CAMEROUN ELECTIONS LEGISLATIVES DU 17 MAI 1997 CIRCONSCRIPTION ELECTORALE BENOUÉ BENOUÉ-EST A.N.D.P. TITULAIRES SUBSTANTIVE 1 DOUBOUNLE Nicolas 2 HAMADOU ISSA		REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS OF 17 MAY 1997 ELECTORAL DISTRICT BENOUÉ BENOUÉ-EST N.A.D.P. SUPPLEANTS ALTERNATE 1 SOUDI SANSAR 2 WANE Jonas
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REPUBLIQUE DU CAMEROUN ELECTIONS LEGISLATIVES DU 17 MAI 1997 CIRCONSCRIPTION ELECTORALE BENOUÉ BENOUÉ-EST S.D.F. TITULAIRES SUBSTANTIVE 1 AHMADOU BAREL 2 NOJAH DJAMBELE Victorine		REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS OF 17 MAY 1997 ELECTORAL DISTRICT BENOUÉ BENOUÉ-EST S.D.F. SUPPLEANTS ALTERNATE 1 SAIDOU MAMDOUDOU 2 FOKWA Humphred KUCHAMBI
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REPUBLIQUE DU CAMEROUN ELECTIONS LEGISLATIVES DU 17 MAI 1997 CIRCONSCRIPTION ELECTORALE BENOUÉ BENOUÉ-EST R.D.P.C. TITULAIRES SUBSTANTIVE 1 PATHEALE Jean CLAUDE 2 SOULEYMANOU SALI		REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS OF 17 MAY 1997 ELECTORAL DISTRICT BENOUÉ BENOUÉ-EST C.P.D.M. SUPPLEANTS ALTERNATE 1 BENDAMJI Jean 2 MOHAMADOU LAMINOU
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REPUBLIQUE DU CAMEROUN ELECTIONS LEGISLATIVES DU 17 MAI 1997 CIRCONSCRIPTION ELECTORALE BENOUÉ BENOUÉ-EST U.D.C. TITULAIRES SUBSTANTIVE 1 MAOUNDE WE 2 DJIBBO DJHDA		REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS OF 17 MAY 1997 ELECTORAL DISTRICT BENOUÉ BENOUÉ-EST C.D.U. SUPPLEANTS ALTERNATE 1 Mile MBADOUNDI SALIOU BAHOURO
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REPUBLIQUE DU CAMEROUN ELECTIONS LEGISLATIVES DU 17 MAI 1997 CIRCONSCRIPTION ELECTORALE BENOUÉ BENOUÉ-EST M.D.R. TITULAIRES SUBSTANTIVE 1 DOUBNE DAMA 2 VAIDOU David		REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS OF 17 MAY 1997 ELECTORAL DISTRICT BENOUÉ BENOUÉ-EST M.D.R. SUPPLEANTS ALTERNATE 1 HAIRIGA ISSA SIOUNG Valentin
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REPUBLIQUE DU CAMEROUN ELECTIONS LEGISLATIVES DU 17 MAI 1997 CIRCONSCRIPTION ELECTORALE BENOUÉ BENOUÉ-EST U.N.D.P. TITULAIRES SUBSTANTIVE 1 BOUBAKARY 2 OUSMANOU AMAN SA'ALY		REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS OF 17 MAY 1997 ELECTORAL DISTRICT BENOUÉ BENOUÉ-EST N.U.D.P. SUPPLEANTS ALTERNATE 1 IBRAHIM KATCHACHA 2 Mme GAOUSSOUMOU née FAKAREPTI
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ANNEX X

The Count: Compilation and Proclamation of Results, 22-29 May 1997

The details of the process of compilation and proclamation of votes are to be found in Chapter 2 of the Observer Group Report. Our Group was informed by political party representatives and others during our pre-deployment briefings of concerns arising from the possibility of a 20-day delay between the close of poll and the final declaration of results by the Supreme Court. The Group referred to this delay and its impact on the process in our Interim Statement of 19 May 1997 (see *Annex VII*). In the Group's Departure Statement of 22 May it was stated that some members would remain in Cameroon to follow this phase of the process. Accordingly, this annex refers to the period from 22-29 May inclusive.

In the event, we were able to observe the verification and compilation of the reports of the Divisional Supervisory Commissions (DSCs) by the National Commission for the Final Counting of Votes (NCFCV), and the preparation of its report to the Supreme Court. As we left Yaoundé on 29 May 1997, a notice issued by the President of the Supreme Court, invited petitioners and MINAT officials to make their presentations concerning the parliamentary elections to the Supreme Court from 9 a.m. on Tuesday 3 June 1997. We were therefore unable to observe the Supreme Court in session. This notice allowed just four full days for the Supreme Court to rule on the challenges and reconcile the results before the end of the 20-day period.

It seemed clear that the administrative process had been interrupted by the three days of holiday which immediately followed polling day. Further, it appeared that some DSCs had particular difficulty in reconciling the polling station returns and preparing their reports. Consequently, as late as 27 May 1997, the Supreme Court was still receiving challenges and the reports from some DSCs had not yet reached the Commission. While we appreciated the discretion exercised by the Court in extending the period in which challenges would be received, we view this as a contributory factor to the uncertainty and tension which characterised the period following the poll and prior to our departure.

We observed the proceedings of the mixed NCFCV, which sat in the Library of the Supreme Court Building (*Palais de Justice*), from its inaugural session on Friday 23 May 1997. Membership of the Commission was constituted by an order of the Vice-Prime Minister responsible for Territorial Administration published on 16 May 1997. The allocation of the ten seats reserved to the political parties was undertaken by MINAT on the basis of three categories: parties with representation in the 1992-97 National Assembly; major political parties; and minor political parties. By this formula, one seat each was allocated to the CPDM, UNDP, SDF, MDR, UPC, *Alliance Nationale pour la Démocratie et le Progrès*, *Mouvement pour la Démocratie et le Progrès*, *Parti de l'Alliance Libérale*, *Union Pour la République* and *Démocratie Intégrale du Cameroun*. Although we had earlier heard concern expressed over the composition of the NCFCV and the discretion given to MINAT over which parties were to be represented on the Commission, only one query was raised with us by a minor political party not represented on the Commission as to MINAT's choice.

The Commission's sessions were open to the public and a number of candidates made use of the provision in the electoral law which allowed them to appear before the Commission to present their comments or claims in person. In order to expedite its work the Commission's members accepted a punishing work schedule. We were, however, struck by the fact that whilst the Commission was attempting to process the submissions it had received from the various DSCs, progress was slow-moving. This was for two reasons: firstly, the Commission, a new constitutional body, was attempting to establish its method of work; secondly, the process of examining the submissions from the DSCs was in itself a contentious process because of the fact that each party representative on the Commission would attempt to protect and promote their party's position. Nevertheless, once the Commission's method of work had been established,

we observed a remarkable level of co-operation between the Government's representatives and the representatives of the other political parties.

The substance of the reports of the DSCs reinforced our Group's earlier impression of distinct variations across the country in the interpretation and practical implementation of the law with regard to the administration of the elections. Some of these were of far greater significance than others. Many of the Group's observations on polling day were confirmed in the reports from the DSCs which we were able to hear being examined by the Commission. The reports from the DSCs in themselves varied in quality. Some had been correctly compiled; others indicated that the DSCs' mandate had not been well understood – in one case a DSC had decided to 'annul' the poll at a particular polling station, an act which was well beyond its remit.

We heard of serious irregularities in the conduct of the poll. One report was forwarded to the Commission with copies of seven challenges attached, including one each from the DSC and the Divisional Officer (DO). We heard the NCFCV question the actual existence of a particular polling station from which a counting report (*procès verbal*) had been received, as well as a number of instances where the numbers of votes tallied exceeded the number of electors on the register. The Commission's verification also uncovered transposed figures on the counting reports which when rectified impacted upon the final outcome of a seat.

We were informed on 23 May by officials of the Supreme Court that it had as of that date received 135 challenges arising from the parliamentary elections of 17 May. This figure later rose so that the final number of challenges accepted by the Supreme Court was 145. We were also kept informed by officials at MINAT as to the progress they were making on preparing their responses to these challenges. In the event, MINAT filed its documents on 26 May. However, there seemed little liaison between the Supreme Court and the NCFCV of a kind which would have for example allowed the Commission to examine in the first instance only those returns from seats/divisions which had no challenges against them.

However, the protracted nature of the process of verification allowed an extended period of public debate in the broadcast and print media as to the results of the elections, thereby justifying our earlier stated concern. On Saturday 24 May, the Commission published a statement asserting its independence, reminding the public that only the Supreme Court could proclaim the results of the elections, and cautioning against the continued disputation of the results in the public and private media. This followed a week of speculation and growing tension which had culminated in a press conference given by the Minister of Communications during which he claimed a CPDM victory based on an analysis of the 'official' counting reports.

The continuing Commonwealth observer presence for this stage of the process was well received by all concerned with the parliamentary elections. We regret that even as we left, the results of the elections were not yet known.