

United Nations



Nations Unies

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

*Statement*

## **HUMANITARIAN COORDINATOR IN CAMEROON CONDEMNS THE ATTACKS ON EDUCATION IN THE NORTH-WEST AND SOUTH-WEST REGIONS IN CAMEROON**

Yaoundé, 5 November 2020 – The Humanitarian Coordinator in Cameroon, Mr. Matthias Z. Naab, strongly condemns the repeated attacks on children, teachers, and educational facilities in the North-West and South-West regions of Cameroon.

On 3 November, unidentified armed men kidnapped eleven teachers and school personnel from the Presbyterian primary and secondary schools in Kumbo, in the North-West region, according to a representative of the Presbyterian church of Cameroon. The teachers have not yet been confirmed as released. The following day on 4 November, armed men attacked the Kulu Memorial College in Limbe, South West region. The attackers tortured teachers and children and damaged school facilities. Also, on the same day, nine children were kidnapped on their way to school and released after intimidation later the same day in Fundong in the North West region.

On 23 October, the day before the killing of eight children from Francisca International Bilingual Academy in Kumba, in the South-West region, fifteen children from Progressive Comprehensive college of Bamenda in the North-West region were abducted on their way back from school. Six of them were released the following day, several of whom had been subjected to torture by the kidnappers and had to be hospitalized.

These incidents are part of a pattern of violence against education facilities and personnel as well as kidnapping for ransom of children and teachers in the North-West and South-West regions by non-state armed groups who are calling on residents to boycott schools in the two regions.

“These acts are abhorrent and unacceptable. Education is a fundamental right and children should not be prevented from going to school. It should be a place of safety and learning, not one where children are in fear” said Mr. Naab, who also called for an immediate end to the incitement of violence against schools.

Mr. Naab reiterated the United Nations’ call for all armed actors to abide by their obligations under international human rights law to refrain from any attacks against children and other civilians, and ensure that schools and other educational facilities, as well as teachers are not subjected to violence or threats in any way. These acts could constitute crimes against humanity if proven in a court of law, and the perpetrators and those supporting them, including those in the diaspora must be held accountable.

**For more information, please contact:**

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