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Hon. Chrystia Freeland  
Minister of Foreign Affairs  
Global Affairs Canada

*January 11, 2019*

Re: Cameroon

Dear Minister,

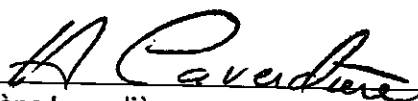
Several Canadians have contacted our offices to express their concerns regarding increasing tensions between the Anglophone and Francophone populations of Cameroon.

Cameroon remains in the throes of a political crisis. As you know in 2017 President Biya, who has been in power since 1982, restricted the rights of Anglophone Cameroonians. According to United Nations reports more than 430,000 people have been forcibly displaced and 42,500 children remain out of school as a result of this crisis. Reports indicate that killings and kidnappings have been perpetrated by both members of the government and separatist groups. Government officials have also reportedly subjected anglophone human rights defenders to arbitrary arrest and detention.

This situation jeopardizes the human rights of all Cameroonians. As a Country sharing the two official languages as Cameroon Canada is in a strong position to play a strong and constructive role in encouraging the respect for human rights, including language rights, in Cameroon. Canada also has experience in conflict prevention and mediation which could be useful for resolving this conflict. Yet, this issue has been neglected by your government, as the number of displaced Cameroonians continues to rise. We urge you to work with your Cameroonian counterparts to put an end to these human rights violations and ensure that the displaced can return home and their children can return to school.

We respectfully ask for an update on Canada's position on Cameroon and any efforts being undertaken to address the human rights situation there.

Thank you for your timely response to this matter.



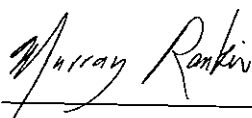
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**Hélène Laverdière**  
NDP Critic on Foreign Affairs



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**Cheryl Hardcastle**  
NDP Critic on International Human Rights



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**Murray Rankin**  
NDP Deputy House Leader and Critic on Justice