

Workshop on the creation of a concerted multi-stakeholder framework to **combat hate speech in the media and social media in Cameroon**

# Final Report



# 01 Introduction

## a. Background & Justification

Cameroon is a multicultural and multilingual country with over 250 ethnic groups and two official languages: English and French. The country faces various challenges related to social cohesion, national unity and peace, particularly since the outbreak of the Anglophone crisis in 2016 and the rise of violent extremism in the Far North region. The 2018 post-election crisis was stimulated by tribal undertones that fueled tensions in the country, both online and offline, with a pseudo ethnic and political divide and the emergence of Tontinard/Sardinard rhetoric. These challenges have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and its socio-economic impacts. One of the factors contributing to these challenges is hate speech, which is defined by the United Nations as «any form of communication by word, writing or gesture, which attacks or uses derogatory or discriminatory language against a person or group on the basis of who they are, in other words, on the basis of their religion, ethnicity, nationality, race, color, descent, sex or other identity factor». Hate speech incites violence, discrimination and hostility towards individuals or groups, undermines social harmony and threatens democratic values.

For some years now in Cameroon, hate speech has been observed both online and in the mainstream media, particularly during

election periods and sometimes in interactions on community-related topics or linked to the Anglophone crisis (the armed separatist conflict that has trapped the North-West and South-West Regions since 2016). This type of discourse fuels intolerance, rejection of others, division and often tribal attacks that result in loss of life.

Among the terms that can be referred to as online hate speech, there are pejorative words used to designate different ethnic groups or regions (such as «Anglofou», «Francofufu», «Biafra», «Beti mafia», «Anglophone a Gauche», «Kaado», «Wari Wari», «Mouton», etc.), insults against ethnicity, and the use of the word «Mouton», ), insults against political opponents or public authorities (such as «dictator», «thief», «puppet», «Tontinard/Sardinard»), calls to violence (such as «kill them all»), false or misleading information that stigmatizes certain communities (accusing them, for example, of spreading corruption or supporting terrorism).

## a. Contexte & Justification.

Le Cameroun est un pays multiculturel et multilingue qui compte plus de 250 groupes ethniques et deux langues officielles : l'Anglais et le Français. Le pays est confronté à divers défis liés à la cohésion sociale, à l'unité nationale et à la paix, en particulier depuis l'éclatement de la crise anglophone en 2016 et la montée de l'extrémisme violent dans la région de l'Extrême-Nord. La crise post-électorale de 2018 a été stimulée par des sous-entendus tribaux qui ont alimenté les tensions dans le pays, à la fois en ligne et hors ligne, avec un pseudo clivage ethnique et politique et l'émergence d'une rhétorique Tontinard/Sardinard. Ces défis ont été exacerbés par la pandémie de COVID-19 et ses impacts socio-économiques. L'un des facteurs qui contribuent à ces défis est le discours de haine, qui est défini par les Nations unies comme « toute forme de communication par la parole, l'écrit ou le gestuel, qui attaque ou utilise un langage péjoratif ou discriminatoire à l'égard d'une personne ou d'un groupe sur la base de ce qu'ils sont, en d'autres termes, sur la base de leur religion, ethnicité, nationalité, race, couleur, ascendance, sexe ou autre facteur d'identité ». Le discours de haine incite à la violence, à la discrimination et à l'hostilité à l'égard d'individus ou de groupes, compromet l'harmonie sociale et menace les valeurs démocratiques.

Depuis quelques années au Cameroun, les discours de haine sont observés à la fois en ligne et dans les médias mainstream, en particulier pendant les périodes électorales et parfois dans des interactions sur des sujets à caractère communautaire ou liés à la crise anglophone (conflit séparatiste armé qui secoue les régions du Nord-Ouest et du Sud-Ouest depuis 2016). Ce type de discours alimente des velléités d'intolérance, du rejet de l'autre, de division et souvent à des attaques tribales qui entraînent des pertes de vies humaines.

Parmi les notions faisant référence aux discours haineux en ligne, on peut citer les termes péjoratifs utilisés pour désigner différents groupes ethniques ou régions (tels que «Anglofou», «Francofufu», «Biafra», «Beti mafia», «Anglophone a Gauche», «Kaado», «Wari Wari», «Mouton», etc,) des insultes à l'encontre d'opposants politiques ou d'autorités publiques (telles que «dictateur», «voleur», «marionnette», «Tontinard/Sardinard»), des appels à la violence (tels que «tuez-les tous»), des informations fausses ou trompeuses qui stigmatisent certaines communautés (en les accusant par exemple de propager la corruption ou de soutenir le terrorisme).

**Atelier** sur la création d'un cadre concerté pluri-acteurs de lutte contre les discours de haine dans les médias et les réseaux sociaux au Cameroun.

**Workshop** on setting up a multi-stakeholder observatory dedicated to countering hate speech in the media and social media in Cameroon.

**15.02.2024**  
Hôtel Hilton - Yaoundé



## b. Workshop objectives

In this fragile context, where peace and social cohesion are threatened by the resurgence of hate speech in the public sphere, it is becoming imperative to join forces to confront this scourge, which in several countries has been a factor in violence, conflict and sometimes genocide. With this in mind, Civic Watch through the #defyhatenow initiative is proposing a response that combines a one-day multi-stakeholder workshop that aims to create an Early Warning and Early Response (EWER) structure in Cameroon that will report on the state of hate speech in Cameroon but also map new trends and propose solutions to curb the rise of offline and online hate. This response also aims to raise awareness and educate the general public about the challenges of hate speech. To this end, the workshop on the creation of a concerted multi-stakeholder framework to combat hate speech in the media and social media in Cameroon was held at the Hilton Hotel

on February 15, 2024.

With the support of the European Union Delegation in Cameroon, this approach involves a plethora of actors from the civic space, the media, CSOs and the State, who will be brought together within a concerted citizen Observatory to prevent and mitigate hate speech on a permanent basis. To this end, this workshop is a starting point for meeting and reflecting together on the strategies to be implemented to ensure the successful implementation of this multi-stakeholder platform and to better address the problem of hate speech in Cameroon.



## c. Specific objectives :

The specific objectives are broken down into several sub-points as follows:

- To engage media professionals in an open discussion about the spread of hate speech and its dangers to society;
  - Exchange ideas and perspectives on existing forms of hate speech, their manifestation within communities and emerging forms;
  - Reflect on innovative strategies to curb their spread and educate the masses about the dangers they pose to society;
  - Identify early warning and early response (EWER) mechanisms within communities that can be harnessed to foster social cohesion and lasting peace in Cameroon.
- Define and adopt a multi-stakeholder approach to combat hate speech and the resulting violence in society;
  - Encourage collective action to promote best practices among state and private players, international partners and peace-lovers.



# 02 Methodology

The workshop took the form of exchanges, group work and recommendations, with participants addressing a number of topics including:

- What is the role of the Observatory in conceptualizing the notion of hate speech: For a normative approach to the fight (For the establishment of the conceptualization & education commission);
- The Observatory & hate speech: Strategies and operational approaches to consider;
- Promotion of the Observatory: What communication and awareness-raising strategies to take into account for certain effectiveness in the fight against hate speech (Communication commission);
- Financing and prospecting: How to ensure the continuity and sustainability of the joint fight against hate speech via the Observatory?



# 03

## Participants

The multi-stakeholder workshop was attended by over 110 participants from public institutions, non-governmental organizations, diplomatic missions, media associations and civil society organizations. Over 16 media outlets were represented, providing media and information coverage of the workshop.



# D4 Workshop proceedings

**Moderator : Carole Leuwe**

**Word from the Country representative of #defyhatenow/Civic Watch Cameroon**

*Cameroon's remarkable recent progress is overshadowed by the pervasive threat of hate speech and misinformation, particularly in online spaces. These forces fuel social divisions, hindering national cohesion and peaceful development. Recognizing this critical challenge, Association Civic Watch (Civic Watch) through its flagship project #defyhatenow have been proposing alternative actions towards countering hate both online and offline. The Upcoming elections in 2025 in Cameroon already signals the dangers that hate speech can have on the country's democratic progress.*

*With support from the European Union delegation to Cameroon (EU), Civic Watch and the EU came up with a dialogue platform that seeks to unite all actors from the civil society and national institutions to watch, warn and take actions against hate speech in Cameroon during electoral periods. This initiative seeks to bridge the gap between government institutions and the civil society in fighting against hate speech in Cameroon.*

*This engagement shall involve policymakers and practitioners through open dialogue and knowledge exchange as they look for response to the problems of hate speech and mitigation strategies. By creating this platform for collaboration between the government here represented by*

*the Minister of Communications and a cross section of the civil society testifies of the engagement of people to jointly fight hate.*

*I want to take this opportunity to welcome people of good will who have taken out time to honour this invitation. May I equally warn you that this is an uphill task that will not be easy given the nature of the job you shall be called upon to do. The active participation of the EU and its member states has been crucial for this project's success. The EU's involvement lends international weight and support for the initiative, "We must put general interest in front and above association and organisation ego.*







## A word from Mr Philippe LAFOSSE, Political Adviser and Deputy Head of the EU Delegation in Cameroon

### Excerpt

*“As we all know, Cameroon, proud of its cultural and social diversity, is faced with a number of tensions that are exacerbated in part by the circulation of discourse online or in the media, which further inflames the already fragile situation. Against this backdrop, and especially in the run-up to the upcoming elections, online hate speech poses a serious medium-term threat to the cohesion of a democratic society, the protection of human rights and the rule of law.*

*Faced with this universal reality, it is imperative that we act together. And this requires concerted action by a number of players from different fields. It is for this reason that the European Union Delegation in Cameroon, which has been working to combat hate speech for several years, is today actively advocating and supporting the Civic Watch Cameroon initiative, which is working to set up a dynamic multi-actor framework dedicated*

*to preventing, raising awareness of, detecting and mitigating all forms of hate speech online and in the media.*

*Ladies and Gentlemen*

*This multi-actor platform for combating hate speech, made up of civil society players, media representatives, political parties, public and private players, is intended to be an essential tool for effectively monitoring, analyzing and countering these toxic discourses that can threaten social cohesion and the peace that is a cherished principle in Cameroon. It would enable us to collect relevant data, identify emerging trends and target groups, and assess the impact of these discourses on our societies. By providing valuable information to political decision-makers, the media and civil society, such a framework could help guide public policy, raise public awareness and promote frank and constructive intercultural dialogue.*

*But more than that, whether it's a network, a movement or a multi-actor Observatory to combat hate speech, this initiative would send a strong message to the national and international community: that of our shared commitment to the*

values of tolerance, respect and human dignity. By joining forces to combat hate speech, we are affirming our determination to build a world where everyone can live freely, without fear of discrimination or violence.

While we recognize and applaud the efforts of the Republic of Cameroon to curb this phenomenon through the implementation of several actions carried out in the field over the past few years by the Ministry of Communication, the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications, the National Communication Council, and the National Commission for the Promotion of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism, we would also like to warmly welcome the commitment of local associations and organizations working on a daily basis to push back the frontiers of hatred online and within local communities. We are thinking here of Civic Watch via the #defyhatenow initiative supported by the Federal Republic of Germany, which is the one that brings us all together here today.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the fight against hate

speech is a complex challenge, but it is our duty to rise to it. By setting up an Observatory dedicated to this fight, we are sending out a clear message: that of our determination to build a better future for all. I therefore call on you to join me in this crucial effort. Together, we can and must make a difference.

Thank you for your support"



## Interlude



## Keynote Address:

**Combating hate speech through the use of digital tools and ICTs in Cameroon: Context and Perspectives - AKERE T. MUNA: Former Batonnier of the Cameroon Bar Association**



## Words from the Minister for Communication

Extrait

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

*Hate speech is not simply a word thrown into the air; it is the precursor to the most despicable and destructive acts known to mankind. They are intrinsically an attack on tolerance, inclusion, diversity and the very essence of our traditional, republican and democratic norms and principles. They undermine the very foundations of our togetherness, tear at the fabric of society and feed the flames of division and violence, rolling back the cause of peace, stability, sustainable development and human rights for all. No society can afford to remain passive in the face of this insidious threat to our most fundamental values of respect, tolerance and human dignity.*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

*The current national situation is ample proof that comments posted on social media can have an impact on the security of the State and individuals. It's a good time to be aware of our common desire to pool our efforts to prevent the harmful effects of this scourge. The speed of information, the diversity of communication channels and the breadth of audiences amplify the slightest attempt to disseminate hate speech.*

*That's why this workshop on the creation of this Observatory is so important. We must not only monitor and analyze hate speech in all its forms, but also develop effective strategies to counter and prevent it. We must educate, sensitize and mobilize our communities to become bulwarks against this wave of hatred that seeks to drown our humanity under its toxic waves.*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

*During this workshop, I encourage you to share your ideas, experiences and recommendations.*

*We need to work hand in hand, putting aside our differences, to forge solutions that will have a real impact on the ground. We are convinced that it is by combining our efforts and optimizing the actions to be carried out within this framework of reflection that a positive energy will spring forth, capable of sowing the seeds of peace in people's minds, so as to annihilate the words that stigmatize, discriminate and divide, leading to atrocious violence.*

*The need to implement this initiative to prevent and raise awareness of the threats that misuse of freedom of expression and the press, for example, poses to the country's stability and national cohesion. It is for this reason that the Ministry of Communication, as guarantor of the implementation of the Head of State's communication policy, lends its full support to the implementation of this dynamic coalition of civil society and the media.*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

*A few days after the celebration of Youth Day, it is important to declare that our children deserve a better world, free from hatred and intolerance. It is up to us, here and now, to offer them this legacy. To conclude, allow me to reaffirm our government's total commitment to this essential fight. We will do everything in our power to support this initiative in its crucial mission. Together, we have the power to make a difference. Together, we can build a future where respect and diversity are celebrated, where everyone feels safe and respected in their difference. Together, we can defeat hate speech and build a future of peace, justice and inclusion for all. And that requires firm commitment and resolute action.*

*Wishing you every success in your work, I hereby declare open the workshop on the launch of a multi-stakeholder civil society and media Observatory to combat hate speech in the media and on social media in Cameroon.*

*Thank you for your attention.*





## Family Picture



Panel Discussions: Reflections on hate speech and its aberrations: the role of local actors in reversing the trend in the light of the elections in Cameroon

## Panelists :

- **Pr. Armand Leka Essomba:** Sociologist, Professor, University of Yaoundé 1, Executive Director of the CERESC at the University of Yaoundé 1
- **Madama Yvonne Muma Bih:** Co-Founder of the Cameroon Women Peacebuilders Movement and Member of the Cameroon Women Peace Convention
- **Mr. Serge Bayimbe:** Program Specialist, expert in communication for development at UNESCO Central Africa
- **Mr. Ngala Desmond:** President of Civic Watch/ Country Representative #defyhatenow



## WORKING SESSION

**Main theme :** What multi-actor strategies to implement against hate speech to prevent tensions and violence for stability in Cameroon?

**Group 1 :** Reflections on the definition of a conceptual and regulatory framework for hate speech in Cameroon: How to understand the dynamics of hate speech and its abuses?

This discussion group focused on the problem of

establishing a clear definition of what constitutes hate speech in Cameroon's local context. The aim was to propose lines of analysis to better define a conceptual framework and improve the regulatory framework for determining the hateful or non-hateful nature of speech.

To establish a conceptual and regulatory framework, it is important to take into account several elements to qualify a word/term or message as hate speech, notably:

- The context
- The bearer of the message
- The content and form of the speech
- The likelihood of the speech conveying hatred or rejection

It should be noted that the purpose of the speech is decisive in characterizing a message or set of words as hateful. A speech can be qualified as hateful by assessing its amplification/evolution; the intent to harm that motivates its dissemination, and its willingness to stigmatize a specific community.

The proliferation of hate speech can lead to a number of introverted and extroverted consequences for the individual or a community:

- Anti-speech (jokes)
- Avoidance, invisibility or indifference to messages calling for isolation, rejection or exclusion.
- The creation of a climate of mistrust, fear and intolerance
- Discrimination or segregation, which is a higher form of ostracism
- Physical attack / physical violence
- Extermination / violent extremism



as defined by Gordon Allport

**Recommendations :** Pour au mieux atténuer les discours haineux sur le plan réglementaire,

- Il est recommandé de les dénoncer At best, hate speech can be mitigated by regulation,
- Systematically denounce hate speech.
- Further promote media and information literacy for all social strata
- Change the narrative and approach to dealing with the problem of hate speech, shifting the focus from the pejorative aspect of the notion of 'hate speech' to a more inclusive, positive notion that refers to a more positive visualisation of the problem of living together and social cohesion (according to Pr Charly Gabriel Mbock).
- Engage and insist on the societal responsibility of all actors within society, from the family unit to the nation-state.
- Improve the 2010 law on cybercrime 241 CP.

**Rapporteur : Dr Nkulu Atangana**

**Coordonnateur : Pr Charly Gabriel Mbock**

**Group 2:** Ideas and proposals on the methodological approach and operational strategy to be adopted to detect, analyse and mitigate hate speech in the media, online and offline

At the end of the brainstorming session, Group 2 emerged with a series of strategic proposals that will enable the multi-stakeholder Observatory to detect, analyse and mitigate hate speech in the media, online and offline, including:

**How to detect hate speech :**

1. Document the lexical field of hate speech;
2. Create a hate speech database and constantly enrich it with new discriminating vocabulary;
3. Make this lexicon available to algorithms, in the form of keywords and tags, which will make

it possible to identify and track down, through reporting, all hurtful comments online.

**Procedure for analysing hate speech:**

1. Recruit local moderators who work with social media to assess the context of the use of offensive words, with a view to censoring them a posteriori if they are found to be used with malicious intent;
2. 2- Systematically monitor the publications that generate the most buzz and reactions, to ensure that they do not contain hate speech, and report them for censorship if necessary.

**Strategy to mitigate hate speech in the media, online and offline**

1. Citizenship education from basic level;
2. Introduction of digital technology and its proper use in training curricula from the earliest stages;
3. Enforcement of the law to punish the perpetrators of hate speech, with graduated sanctions ranging from warnings to imprisonment, account deletion and other repressive measures;
4. Deletion of all fake accounts on social media;
5. Systematic identification of all Internet users when creating a social media account.
6. Promote a charter of good conduct online and offline for peace and social cohesion in Cameroon.

**Rapporteur : Marie-Noëlle GUICHI**

**Coordonnateur : Pr Baba WAME**

**Group 3:** Reflections on the Observatory's financing and support strategies for long-term impact

To ensure the Observatory's effective operation over the medium and long term, it is necessary to multiply funding strategies to cover the expenses associated with structuring and running the platform independently. To this end, several proposals have

been put forward:

- Identify and encourage the commitment of stakeholders with an interest in the fight against hate speech for technical and financial support and accompaniment. To do this, we first need to carry out stakeholder mapping.
- Seek and develop multi-sector partnerships with national and international players. In particular, with the Cameroon Bar Association for support and legal advice: diplomatic representations, academic and research institutes and think tanks, etc.
- Periodically raise funds by mobilising CSOs, influencers and volunteers to provide staff and logistical resources to sustain the platform's work.
- Solve projects and call for applications to support projects launched locally and internationally.

**Rapporteur : Messambe Cedric**

**Coordonnateur : Muma Bih Yvonne**



**Group 4:** Reflection on good communication and awareness-raising practices to engage more actors in the fight against hate speech

The aim of this group was to make recommendations on strategies for attracting more players and partners

to awareness campaigns, both online and in local communities. To this end, the participants defined in advance the various stakeholders to be engaged at district, departmental and regional level, based on the «bottom-top» approach.

In addition, it is necessary to segment the sectors of activity in which hate speech has been identified as on the increase, and the organizations/associations/institutions operating in these areas, in order to engage them. Examples include

- Youth associations,
- Market leaders,
- Community and religious leaders,
- Leaders of associations/community meetings/tontines
- Content creators/influencers
- Civil society actors

To ensure that communication and awareness-raising campaigns bear fruit, it is important to contextualize the messages to be disseminated according to the environment and culture of the target populations.

Communication and awareness-raising channels to be prioritised at local level include community radio stations, street criers and discussion and exchange groups (the «palaver tree» principle) to demystify the notion of hate speech. Focusing on discussion and exchange groups between local actors will enable the public to participate by giving their opinions and proposals on the best ways to mitigate hate speech in their specific context. In order to better engage people living in rural areas, it will be necessary to adopt local languages to facilitate exchanges and interactions during discussion groups.

It was pointed out that because the media are

sometimes the main vectors of hatred through the dissemination of stigmatising and discriminatory content that tends to reject a fringe of the community, it is becoming imperative for the media to change their paradigm of function; not to want to assimilate to Western media but by adopting a fundamental function of education and promotion of ethics, living together and the culture of tolerance.

**Rapporteur : Ngufack Ntemgwa**  
**Coordinator : Me Balbine Manga**





# 05 ANNEXES

## A1. Report on the 1<sup>st</sup> brainstorming session



### PROJET N°SEAE -12/2023-DELCMRY-PIO-SER

Report on the brainstorming session on setting up a multi-stakeholder Observatory dedicated to combating hate speech in Cameroon

Date : January 09, 2024

Heure / Time : 3 PM

Lieu / Venue : Djeuga Hotel – Yaoundé

Organisateur : #defyhatenow / Civic Watch Cameroon

Moderator : Marie Noelle Guichi

Rapporteur : Donald Tchiengue

The working session began with opening remarks by Country Representative #defyhatenow/Civic Watch Cameroon, who briefly presented the vision and need to set up a kind of Observatory that would federate the efforts of various players to fight hate speech more effectively on the eve of the upcoming 2025 elections. To illustrate this point, he presented the #defyhatenow tool 'Mungo 2.0', which is used to map online trends with references to hate messages and hotbeds of crisis and violence in Cameroon.

Following Ngala Desmond's presentation, Denis Mbezele of the NCC took the floor to explain that, in his view, the initiative is a practical proposal that sets itself apart from initiatives that have been taking place in Cameroon for some years now. He believes that the advantage of this type of activity is the desire to materialise pragmatic actions in the fight against hate speech: how to identify, map and mitigate it. Given that it is necessary to unite for greater impact, he expects this meeting to produce proposals, solutions and decision-making.

Blaise Pascal Andzongo (Eduk-Media) added that it was important to determine the contextual meaning to be given to the concept of hate speech in Cameroon. For him, it's by defining a clear conceptual framework that we can better address effective solutions to the problem.

Comfort Mussa (Sisterspeak 237) took the floor to ask whether it would be possible to include magistrates and lawyers in the Observatory to be set up. In her view, it is imperative to involve the legal profession in this type of initiative. She added that hate speech is more than just words; it's an entire narrative built up over time that needs to be deconstructed. Ngala took the floor again to clarify that this is indeed one of the Observatory's roles: In a consensual manner, to identify and define the messages to be considered hateful according to local, cultural and sociological realities. This justifies the presence of academics such as Pr

Baba Wamé, and the desire to add executives from the legal profession.

Dr Sakah Bernard maintains that it is very important to have this type of concerted action, bringing together several players from different fields. He believes that it is precisely within this Observatory that it will be possible to reflect on the endogenous conceptualization of hate speech. He also asked a question about the «Mungo 2.0» tool: is it possible to always check the authenticity of information (alerts) and data published on the platform? In addition, he would like to know if it is possible to have illustrative examples of how the platform works in terms of alerts. Finally, he asks how we can ensure that the Observatory initiative is in line with reality on the ground, and what the prospects might be.

Ateki Seta (NewSeta) returned to the concept of the Observatory. He asked what meaning we wanted to give to this concept and to the initiative to be set up. What are the Observatory's expectations, prospects and target group? He also returned to the problem of defining hate speech and identifying the legal framework. He suggested not only focusing on manifestations of online hate speech, but also knowing how to anticipate the promotion of such speech in the field and ensure that it is effectively reported.

In addition, he considers it necessary to involve government players in this initiative to guarantee the project's sustainability and to hope for substantial funding. However, he questions the relevance of this Observatory in a context where several similar initiatives already exist.

Boutchouang Nghomsi (JCI) supports the idea of this type of initiative. He believes that the concept of an Observatory is better suited to illustrate what we intend to do within this multi-stakeholder platform. Emphasising the need to clearly define the concept of hate speech, he points out that this initiative is timely and must be different from



what government players are doing, as CSOs have different operating procedures and field experience.

Pr Baba Wamé reassures us of the importance of this type of synergy of action. He believes that before tackling the consequences of hate speech, we should adopt anticipatory measures to deal effectively with the causes of hate speech in Cameroon. By doing so, less effort will be required to mitigate the consequences. Rather than seeking a consensual definition of hate speech, which he considers illusory, he argues for the approval of a methodical approach to identifying and mitigating the vectors of hate speech online and in the media. One way of doing this is to get closer to those who spread hate messages on social media and in the media.

Janvier Njikam (UFP), for his part, believes that the Observatory should play the role of a «watchdog» for the State, involving all the different professions in identifying, alerting and proposing solutions to mitigate hate messages in the media and on social media.

Cedric Messambé (CNJC) proposes that the word «Observatory» be changed, as its interpretation can create controversy. He proposes the terms «coalition», «network», «platform» instead. However, he agreed to a synergy of actions.

Ateki Seta took the floor again to specify that the approach to be adopted within this initiative must be inclusive and consider everyone, and must require the support of the government. He suggested that the initiative could be grafted onto existing bodies dedicated to combating hate speech. He reiterates that it is imperative to provide appropriate answers to the questions of sustainability of the initiative, particularly in terms of human resource management. He believes that if it is exclusively civil society that is involved, it will be difficult to find sources of funding for the initiative. Hence his proposal for a multi-stakeholder collaboration with proven expertise to provide a forum for dialogue and monitoring.

Blaise Pascal Andzongo was keen to point out that we should be cautious about the foundations of the initiative, for fear of missing the objectives; especially about the role we would like to attribute to government players within the dynamic. As a methodological approach for the Observatory, he proposes the formula: Monitor – Alert – React.

Thierry Didier Kuicheu (Association des Blogueurs du Cameroun – ABC) agrees in principle with the idea of an Observatory. He agrees with Blaise Pascal's proposal to speak of a civil society Observatory. He points out that the ABC is currently setting up a project to combat hate speech with the support of #defyhatenow. He confirms that he is ready to mobilise bloggers for the success of the initiative.

Dr Sakah takes the floor again to propose the term «Working group of multistakeholder on hate speech» for the naming of the initiative. He proposed that it should be a platform for dialogue and exchange between CSOs and the government.

Denis Mbezele, in turn, suggests that we shouldn't count too much on the government to take part in this initiative. On the other hand, he suggests that civil society should first develop this project, and take initiatives with visible results. Later, it will be possible to solicit the involvement of public players. Similarly, when it comes to funding, he advises against expecting anything from the State. But it is possible to approach national and international donors for support and substantial contributions to get the initiative up and running.

It was on this point that Marie Noëlle Guichi closed the brainstorming session with a summary of the exchanges. She then handed over to Ngala, who made his closing remarks on the initiative's direct prospects, notably the organisation of a multi-actor workshop to set up an Observatory to combat hate speech, the creation of an online

platform to ensure the continuation of reflections on the implementation of the said project, and the involvement of more actors from diverse fields in this initiative.

Written by  
**TCHIENGUE Donald**

Read & approved by  
**NGALA Desmond**

## A2. Agenda Workshop at Hilton

**Atelier de réflexion sur la mise en place d'un Mécanisme pluri-acteurs dédié à la lutte contre les discours de haine au Cameroun / Reflection meeting on setting up a multi-stakeholder mechanism to address hate speech in Cameroon**

**Date :** 15 Février 2024 / 15 February 2024

**Lieu / Venue :** Hotel Hilton

### 09h- 10h

Arrivée des participants / **Arrival of participants**  
Cérémonie d'ouverture - Phase protocolaire/  
**Opening ceremony - Protocol stage**

### 10h - 11h

- Introduction et chant de l'Hymne National/  
**Introductions and Singing of the National Anthem**  
- Mot du Représentant pays #defyhatenow/  
Civic Watch Cameroon/ **A word by the Country Representative of #defyhatenow/Civic Watch Cameroon**  
- Mot de Son Excellence M. l'Ambassadeur de la Délégation de l'UE au Cameroun / **A Word from H.E, The Ambassador of the European Union Delegation to Cameroon**

### Intermede

- **Exposé Inaugural / Keynote Address : Lutte**

contre les discours haineux à travers l'utilisation des outils numériques et les TIC au Cameroun: Contexte et Perspectives // **Mitigating hate speech through the use of digital tools and ICTs : Context and prospects in Cameroon.**

AKERE T. MUNA: Ancien Bâtonnier du Cameroun

- Mot d'Ouverture de Monsieur le Ministre de la Communication / **Opening Speech by the Minister of Communication**

Photo de Famille / **Family Photo**

### 11h - 11h 30 :

Pause-Café / **Coffee Break**

### 11h30 - 12h30

Panel // Panel Discussions: Réflexions sur les discours haineux et ses dérives : le rôle des acteurs locaux pour inverser la tendance à l'aune des élections au Cameroun // Reflections on hate speech and its consequences: the role of local actors in reversing the trends of hate speech on the eve of the elections in Cameroon.

Pr. Armand Leka Essomba: Sociologue, Professeur, Université de Yaoundé 1, Directeur exécutif du CERESC chez Université de Yaoundé 1

**Madama Yvonne Muma Bih:** Co-Foundateur du Cameroon Women Peacebuilders Movement et Membre du Cameroon Women Peace Convention

**Mr. Serge Bayimbe:** Spécialiste des programmes, expert en communication pour le développement chez UNESCO Afrique centrale

**Mr. Ngala Desmond:** President de l'Association Civic Watch/**Representative Pays #defyhatenow**

Echanges et discussions / **Feedback and discussions**

### Intermede

**12h45 – 13h45 :** Atelier de travail / **Working Sessions**

**Thématique principale / Central thème :** Quelles stratégies multi-acteurs à mettre en œuvre contre les discours haineux pour prévenir les tensions et les violences pour la stabilité au Cameroun? // **What multi-stakeholder approach can be put in place to combat hate speech and prevent tension and violence for stability in Cameroon?**

**Groupe 1 :** Réflexions sur la définition d'un cadre conceptuel et réglementaire des discours haineux au Cameroun: Comment comprendre la dynamique des discours haineux et ses dérives // **Discussions on the definition of a conceptual and regulatory framework for hate speech in Cameroon: How to understand the dynamics of hate speech and its consequences.**

**Groupe 2:** Idées et propositions sur la démarche méthodologique et de la stratégie opérationnelle à adopter pour détecter, analyser et atténuer les discours haineux dans les médias, en ligne et hors ligne // **Proposals and recommendations on the methodological approach and operational strategy to be adopted to detect, analyze and mitigate hate speech in media, online and offline.**

**Groupe 3:** Réflexions sur les stratégies de financements et d'appui de l'observatoire pour un impact à long terme / **Reflections on the funding and support strategies of the Working Group for long-term impact.**

**Groupe 4:** Réflexion sur les bonnes pratiques de communication et de sensibilisation pour l'engagement de plus d'acteurs dans la lutte contre les discours haineux / **Reflection on best practices in communication and awareness-raising to engage more stakeholders in the fight against hate speech**

**13h45 – 14h:** Prestation artistique et culturelle / **Artistic and cultural performance**

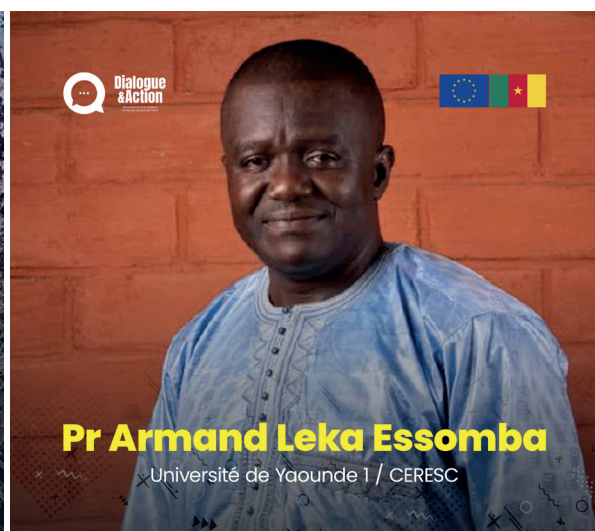
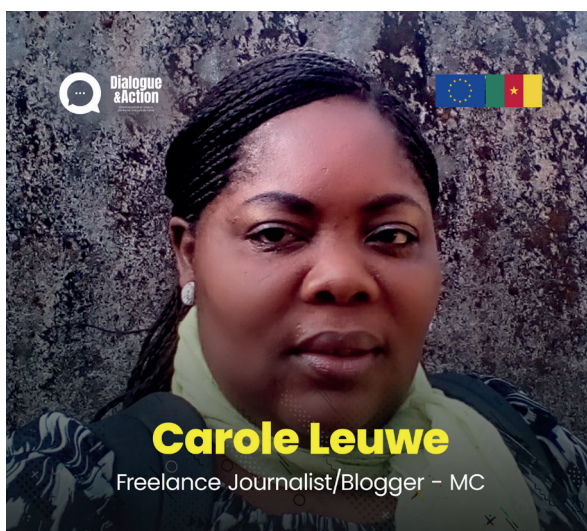
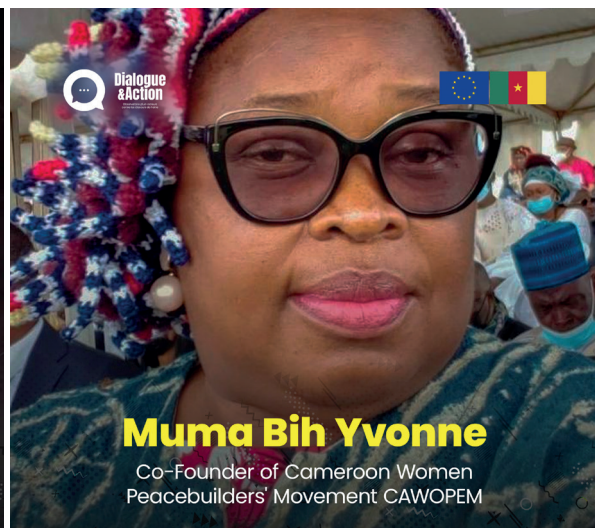
**14h – 14h15:** Lecture des recommandations / **Reading of the Recommendations**

**14h15 – 14h30** Remarques finales et clôture / **Closing remarks**

**Fin de l'événement & Repas / End of Conference & Lunch**



## A3. Quelques photos de l'atelier de travail







# Adopting a holistic and multi-stakeholder approach in **countering hate speech** in the **media and social media in Cameroon**

Adopter une synergie d'actions et une approche holistique dans **la lutte contre les discours de haine** dans les médias et les réseaux sociaux au Cameroun



— **15.02.2024** —

Hôtel Hilton - Yaoundé