

# HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IN CAMEROON

## Eric Siewe Case

- Date of Birth: November 09,1981 at Bana (Cameroon west province) 38 Years old – Father of 2 Children - Electrician
- Arrested on January 28,2019 in Douala. The same date, time and place with Maurice Kamto the opposition leader and President of Cameroon Renaissance Movement (CRM).
- Illegal arrestation was done by Police only with a search warrant not an arrest warrant at the house of his political ally Albert Nzongang with many other people in the house that were not connected to the party.
- 2 days earlier, on January 26,2019 CRM leader and ally lunch a protest against the presential elections result. Mrs. Biya Paul the president for 37 years was proclaimed as the winner.
- Maurice Kamto base on the result poll at their possession claimed victory of the October 2018 presidential election. During peaceful demonstration across the country, the security forces opened fire on supporters, wounding at least 3 people. More than 100 people nationwide were arrested.



# Eric transferred to State Secretary of Defence - SED



Taken to Yaounde (260km away from Douala) and was in custody at **Yaoundé State Secretary of Defense (SED)** where he was kept for more than a week. He will face inhumane tortures.



The SED is an exclusive place of torture controlled by the gendarmerie, where people who are considered a "*problem*" for the government are detained in secret and tortured.

Eric will then be placed in a preventive custody at the **Kondengui Central Prison.**

# Eric at the GSO

Few months later, Eric is illegally withdrawn from the Yaounde Kondengui prison by a Cameroon Police Special forces (GSO – In charge of repressive action against dangerous criminals) and taken to the GSO quarters

Eric was taken there for the mere reason of having worn a Cameroonian indomitable lions jersey with the words “The D-Day” “le jour dit” written on the back of the jersey. The President of Cameroon uttered those words during a speech in which he was saying that Cameroon would be ready to host the 2019 African nation’s cup on the date decided by the African Soccer Association, even though the country’s level of readiness was seriously in doubt. Cameroon lost the hosting of the cup, which was moved to Egypt due the African Soccer Association deciding that Cameroon was not ready.

Cameroon spent close to CFA 1200 billion (more than USD 24 Millions) in building infrastructures not ready at the deadline. The money has not been accounted for, and the people responsible for financial distortions have not been brought to Justice. This is one of the CRM peaceful protest agenda of January 26, 2019.

Eric was severely beaten on a daily basis.  
Brought back to Kondengui prison after denunciation of his counsel



## Yaounde Kondengui Prisoners protest

- July 22, 2019 there was a protest against poor prison conditions, unjust detainment, mistreatment and lack of swift judgement for many prisoners who have been under preventive custody for too long.
- Protest violently quelled by Cameroon security forces.
- Many suspected participants subjected to torture
- Security forces use this opportunity to withdraw Serge was considered to be a leader of the protest and a 'problem'.
- Same night as Eric was coming back from restrooms he was arrested and falsely accused of being part of the protest as one of the main instigators. He was again transferred to the Cameroon defense Secretary.
- Amongst the arrested, Mamadou Mota (CRM vice president), Serge Branco and many others.



## July 22, 2019 Riot

Prisoners transported to undisclosed locations but Eric was withdrawn at night

# Another Trip at the SED and transferred to Mbalmayo prison

- Eric will go through the most inhumane tortures, both physically and mentally.
- Eric and some of the prisoners will be severely beaten by officers on both sides of a gantline; kicked and punched with military wood-stick, boots, and fists.
- Laid naked on a wet floor, and while being sprinkled with cold water, beaten with military wood-stick, boots, and fists. His survival will only come from the fact that at some point the officers got tired and had to stop.
- Eric with others will come out of this with several open wounds on the whole body. Right after they were sustaining wounds, the medical staff will use the same needle on everybody to close and stitch them exposing them to transmittable disease and contamination. For those unsanitary reasons, Eric will say no to medical treatment and will be left with his open wounds and no treatment. They all will then be thrown in a dark basement with no windows until **August 6, 2019** with no exterior contacts.
- The prosecutor will decide to charge him with mutiny. He will be sent to the **Mbalmayo prison** (50 kilometers from Yaoundé) even though his preventive custody papers indicates him being at **central Kondengui prison in Yaoundé**. A few weeks later and after a botched trial, he is sentenced to 2 years in jail for group rebellion and should have been sent to the **Central Kondengui prison**, but he stays in **Mbalmayo**.

# Prosecutions dropped but Eric not released

Cameroon's President Paul Biya ordered prosecutions to be dropped against opposition leaders led by Maurice Kamto, including members of the CRM party (Michele Ndoki) and his allies.

Unfortunately Eric Siewe was not released because he was accused of being part of a Yaounde Kondengui prisoner protest of July 22, 2019.

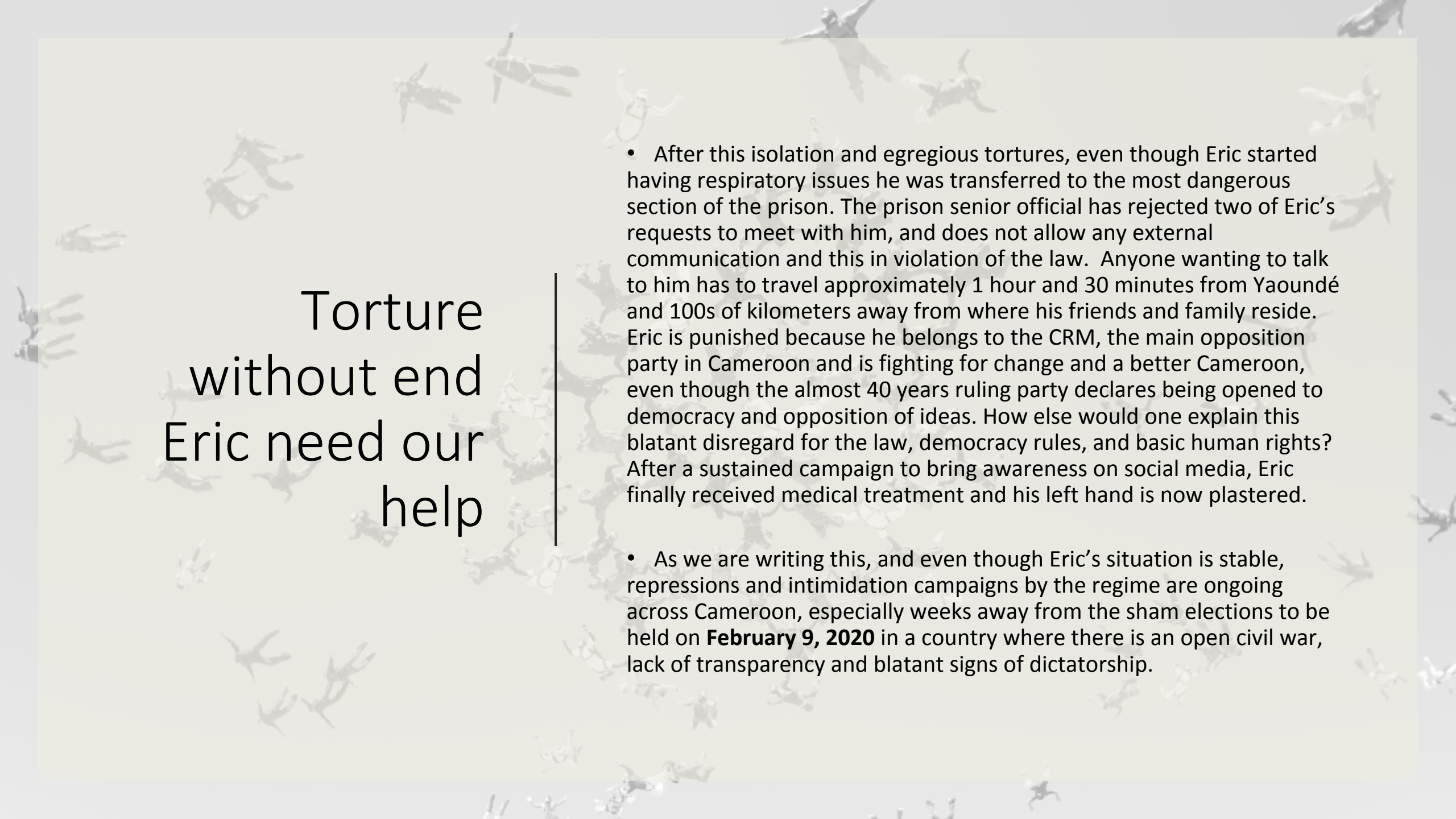
Eric will file appeals. Expectation being that when the court of appeals gets to his case he will be placed under conditional and temporary release based on similar cases that have gone through the same process and were successful, even without an appeal. To no avail and after a while Eric's harassment and tortures resumed.

# Torture without end

- The CRM, Eric's party, through the national council and the voice of its National president decides not to partake in the upcoming municipal and legislative elections of **February 9, 2020**. This decision triggers more repressions from the government against all CRM members, especially those in prison like Eric.
- Eric case finally gets in front of the judge at the court of appeals in Yaoundé, but the prison officials require 10.000 CFA Francs from Eric to be taken there. Complaints from him and his counsel remain fruitless and during the week of **January 20, 2020**, Eric suffers more tortures at the hands of prison guards. There is even an attempt to get other prisoners in an opened conflict with Eric with the goal of getting him beaten and even killed. Then a nurse falsely accuses him of going to the bathroom in a forbidden and non-indicated space, the same him and other prisoners have been using for months.
- Unidentified and masked men came, extracted him from his prison cell, and threw him in isolation. Eric will again, go through the inhumane tortures. He will be severely beaten; kicked and punched with military wood-stick, booths, fists. He will end up with broken bones on his left hand. For eight days, is left without medical assistance even though and x-ray will confirm the broken bones.

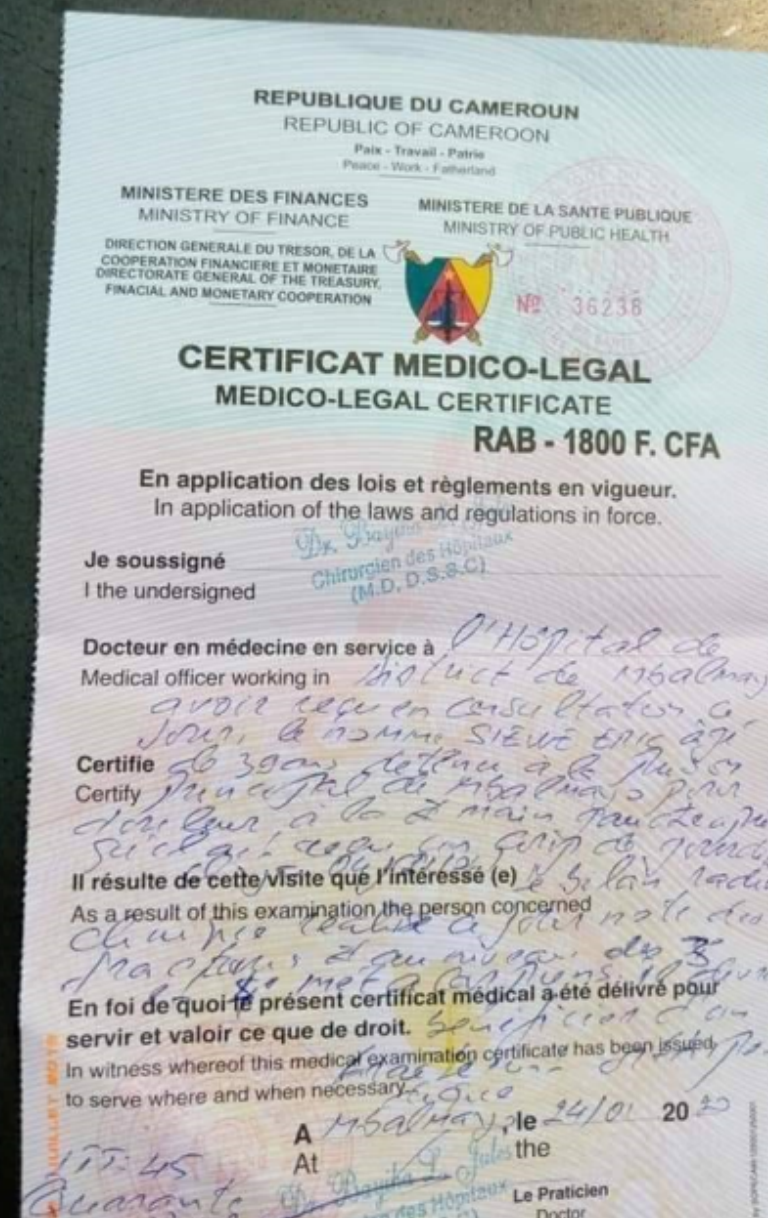




The background of the slide features a repeating pattern of small, light-colored silhouettes of human figures in various falling or diving poses, scattered across the entire surface. The text is overlaid on this pattern.

# Torture without end Eric need our help

- After this isolation and egregious tortures, even though Eric started having respiratory issues he was transferred to the most dangerous section of the prison. The prison senior official has rejected two of Eric's requests to meet with him, and does not allow any external communication and this in violation of the law. Anyone wanting to talk to him has to travel approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes from Yaoundé and 100s of kilometers away from where his friends and family reside. Eric is punished because he belongs to the CRM, the main opposition party in Cameroon and is fighting for change and a better Cameroon, even though the almost 40 years ruling party declares being opened to democracy and opposition of ideas. How else would one explain this blatant disregard for the law, democracy rules, and basic human rights? After a sustained campaign to bring awareness on social media, Eric finally received medical treatment and his left hand is now plastered.
- As we are writing this, and even though Eric's situation is stable, repressions and intimidation campaigns by the regime are ongoing across Cameroon, especially weeks away from the sham elections to be held on **February 9, 2020** in a country where there is an open civil war, lack of transparency and blatant signs of dictatorship.



- After a sustained campaign to bring awareness on social media, Eric finally received medical treatment and his left hand is now plastered.