



July 2019

Key Information

Sector Size (2016)ⁱ

- 9 legal PSCs; 100+ illegal PSCs
- 7,000 PSC personnel

Can PSC personnel carry firearms?

No

* Decree No. 2005/031, art. 23

Montreux Document Participant: No

International Code of Conduct Association (ICoCA)

- ICoCA Member State: No
- ICoCA Company Members: 0
- ICoCA CSO Members: 0

Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights

- Voluntary Principles State Member: No

Members of the Private Security Governance Observatory:

- Communication pour le développement de Maroua (MARCODEV)
- Consortium des ONG/ Association Synergies Développement (SYDEV)
- Ligue des droits et libertés (LDL)

Summary

The private security sector in Cameroon has been reported as having provided multiple positive effects. The sector was recognized as a significant support to public security forces in the fight against insecurity. It has also become a major employer in the country, contributing to lowering the unemployment rate by creating thousands of jobs.

Despite these positive effects, the private security sector in Cameroon suffers from major challenges. A large majority of PSCs operating in the country are not registered nor licenses, damaging the credibility of PSCs who do comply with regulations. The existence of PSCs outside the control of the government constitutes a major challenge for human rights in Cameroon in a context that includes various social tensions, terrorism, and insecurity.

Legal Framework

Cameroon's first law regulating private security, Law No. 97/021, was passed in 1977. Since then, the regulatory framework for PSCs in Cameroon has become rather restrictive, including various laws and decrees regulating PSC activities. Despite this legal framework, PSCs continue to operate in anonymity and outside the law.

- [Law No. 97/021 \(French\)](#)
- [Decree No. 2005/031 \(French\)](#)
- [Law No. 2014/027 \(French\)](#)
- [Presidential Decree n°2015/407 \(French\)](#)

Challenges

A report by the civil society organisation 'Collectif camerounais des organisations des droits de l'homme et de la démocratie (COCODHD)' identified various challenges confronting the private security sector in Cameroon, including but not limited to the following:

- Lack of transparency on the part of the government in granting authorisation;
- The regulation of PSCs does not clearly provide for the principles of fundamental rights and the respect of human rights;

- Ligue du Nord pour la Promotion et la Défense de la Démocratie des Droits de l'Homme et des Libertés (LNDH)
- Les amis du droit (ADD)
- Association pour la promotion du respect de la dignité humaine (APRODIH)
- COFEPRE
- APEDACAM
- Save Africa
- Groupement des femmes des collectivités publiques locales (GFECOP)
- Action citoyenne intégrée
- Collectif Camerounais des Organisations des Droits de l'Homme et de la Démocratie (COCODHD)

- The restrictive definition of PSCs by the law excludes cash-in-transit and escort companies;
- Despite the increasing number of companies providing security services, a public registry does not exist;
- The weak monitoring mechanism for PSCs from the inter-ministerial commission charged with reviewing applications, monitoring, and regulating PSCs;
- Certain PSCs not respecting norms and codes of conduct;
- It is difficult to prove the responsibility of PSCs in cases of complaint from communities or individuals affected by PSC activities.

ⁱ Collectif camerounais des organisations des droits de l'homme et de la démocratie (COCODHD), "Document d'information gouvernance des entreprises de la sécurité privée au Cameroun", May 2019.