



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services



U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

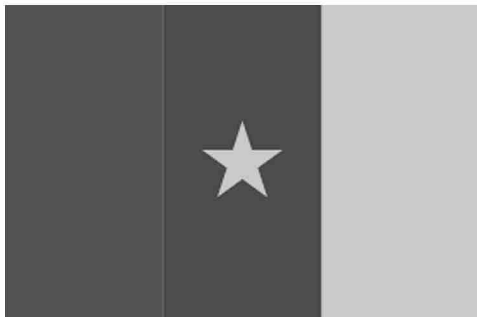


U.S. Citizenship
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Services

Republic of Cameroon

Country of Origin Information

March 27, 2020



By the RAIO Research Unit

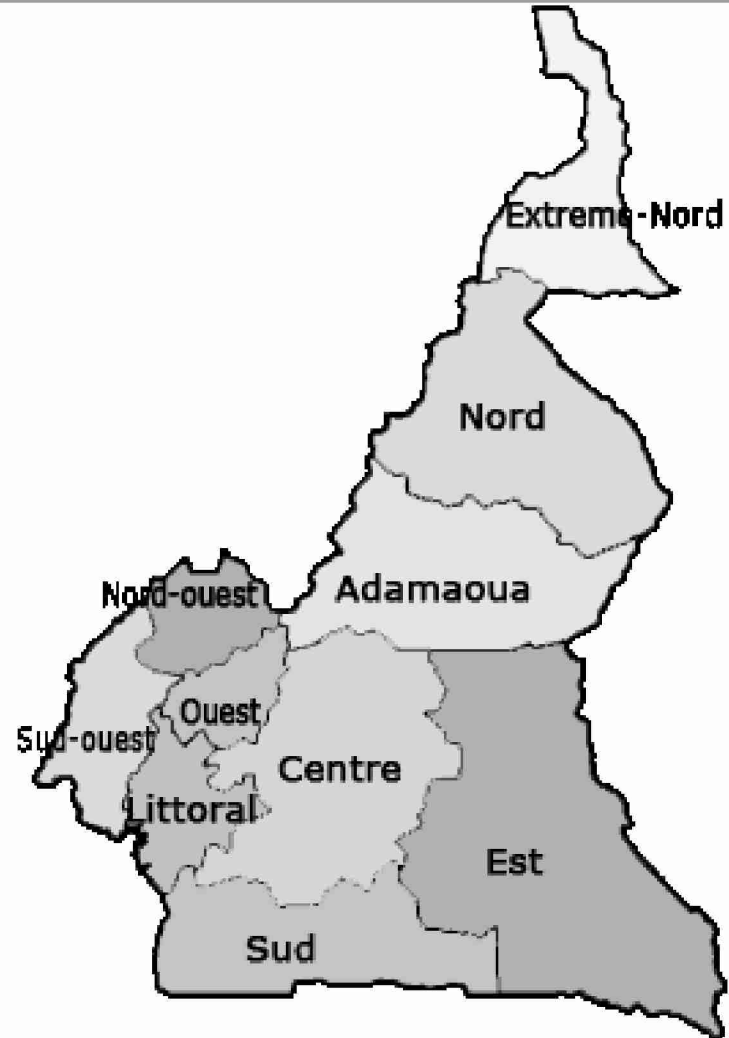
Cameroon Crises in Brief

- Conflict in Anglophone Region
 - ▣ Several armed groups, dozen self-defense militias
 - ▣ 1.9 million people, mostly children, in need of assistance
 - ▣ About 3K people have died
 - ▣ There are about 437K IDPs, and 35K refugees in Nigeria
- Boko Haram
 - ▣ Thousands joined 2012-16
 - ▣ Killed at least 275 people in 2019
 - ▣ Remains active in the Far North



General Information

- Divided into 10 regions
- 28 million people (July 2020 est.)
- Anglophone region has 20% of the total population.
- Ranks 150 out of 189 countries (HDI--2019)
- Extreme North = Boko Haram affected area



Languages in Cameroon

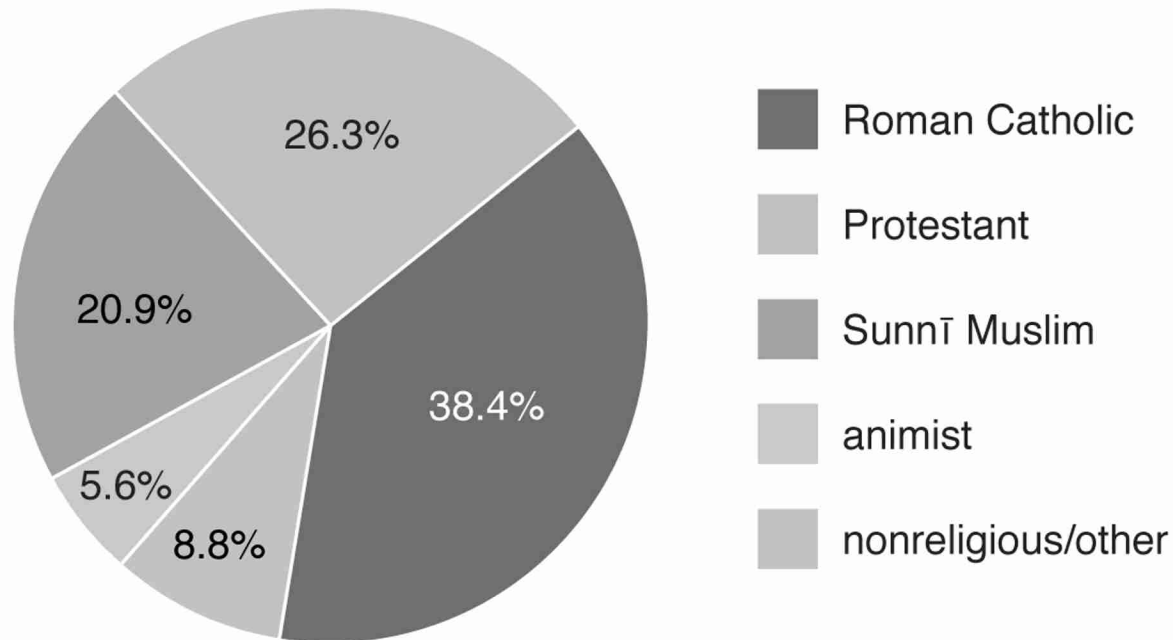
- About 250 languages
- Two official languages: English and French
- Anyone with high school-level education speaks French or English, or both
- French largely spoken in the French-speaking Cameroon and English in the English-speaking Cameroon
- Implicit policy of eliminating English or assimilating English speakers?

Ethnic Groups

- About 250 ethnic groups; major ethnic groups:
 - Housa and Fulani in the north;
 - Bamileke in the west;
 - Beti in center and south;
 - Douala [Basa and Sawa] in south; and
 - Bakwere, Banyangi, and Mankong in Southwest and Northwest region

- Note: COI does not indicate that individuals are targeted in Cameroon on account of ethnicity

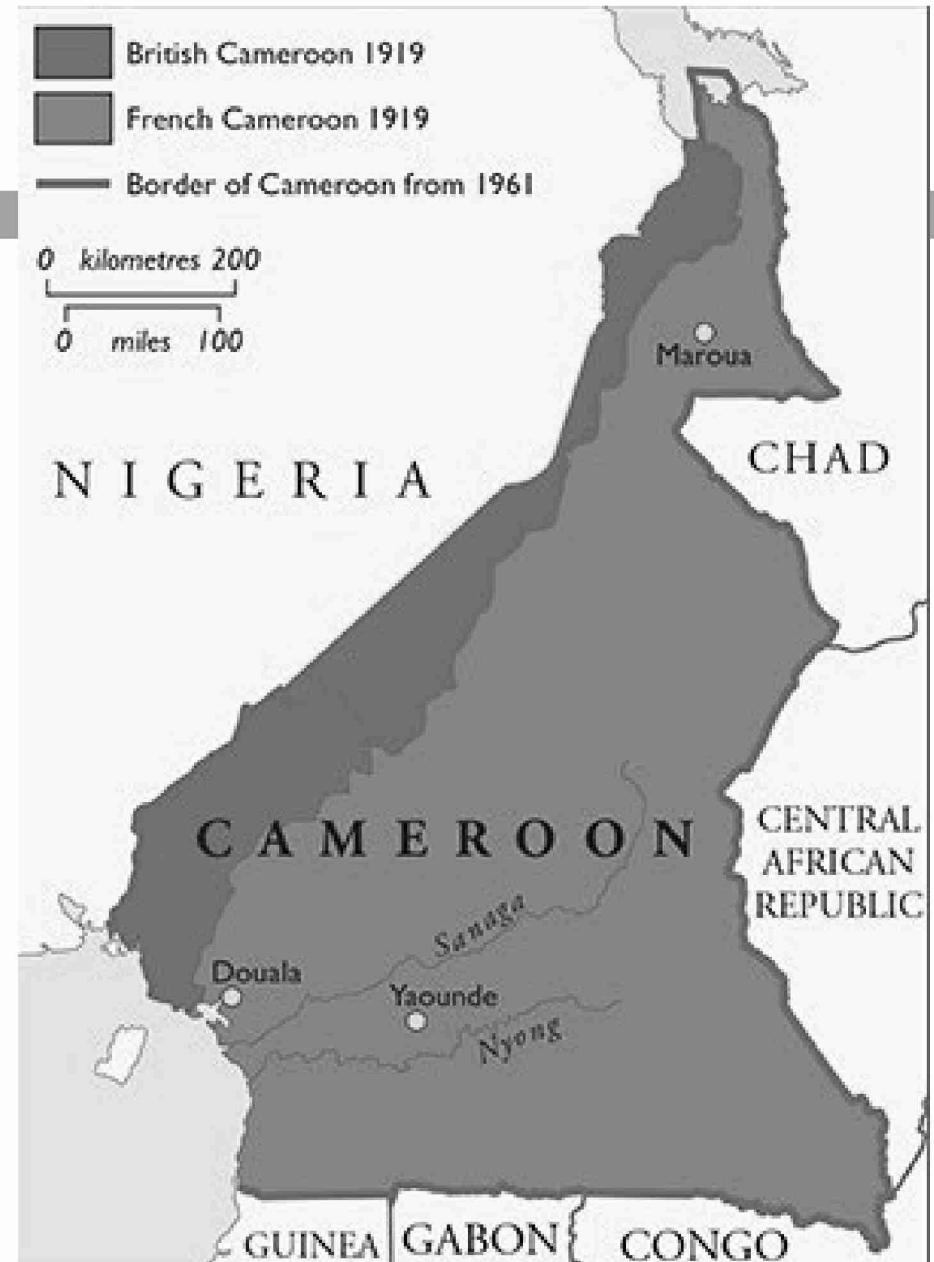
Religious Affiliation (2005)



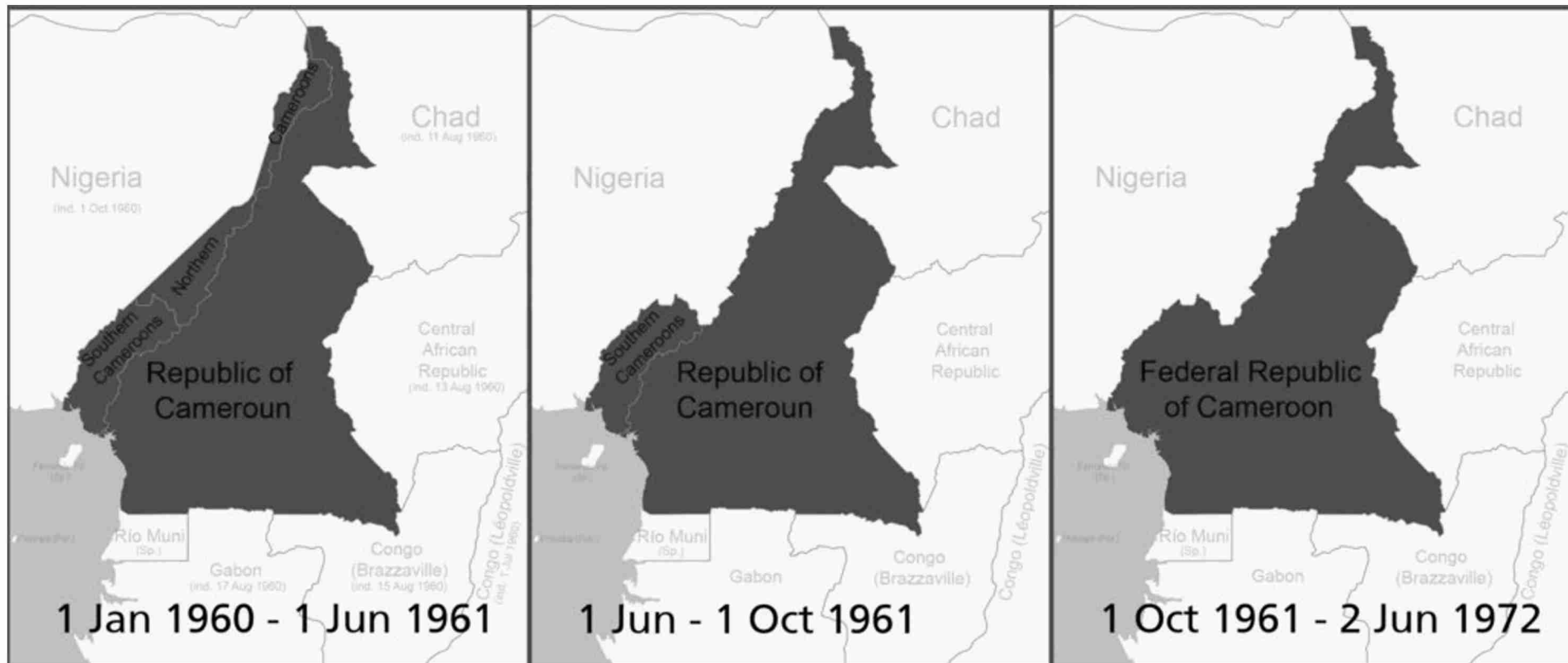
Note: COI does not indicate that individuals are targeted in Cameroon on account of religion

Pre-independence

- 1919-1960, two distinct Cameroons:
 - ▣ British Cameroon (divided into North and South)
 - ▣ French Cameroon



Independence and Transition to Federal Republic – 1960-1961



Post-Independence Cameroon

- 1961: Federal Republic of Cameroon; **two equal states**
- 1972: United Republic of Cameroon
(result of “unfair” referendum organized by President Ahmadou Ahidjo)
- 1984: Republic of Cameroon
(as called before federation)



President Paul Biya (1982 - Present)

- Head of the ruling party, RDPC
- **2008:** President abolished term limits
- 87 years old and 37 years in power
- **October 2018:** “Re-elected” president for 7 years.



Roots of Anglo-Francophone Conflict



- Combination of:
 - Unique cultural identity
 - Historical grievance
 - Treatment of Anglophones as 2nd-class citizens
 - Mistreatment/discrimination in schools, courts, gov offices, gov employment
 - Biya regime favors and elevates Francophone elites
 - Gov. and local interest in oil/resources around Limbe

Past Anglophone Secession Attempts

- **1994:** Beginning of statements for independence from the Republic of Cameroon
- **1999:** The Southern Cameroons National Council (SCNC) unsuccessfully declared independence
- **2006:** The Southern Cameroons Peoples Organization (SCAPO) unsuccessfully declared the Republic of Ambazonia

Current Tensions in Anglophone Region



- ❑ **October 2016:** Protests against imposition of French language (in courts and schools) in English-speaking Cameroon — tip of the iceberg
- ❑ Extremists hijacked peaceful protests and turned them violent
- ❑ Gov security forces responded with brutality, leading to escalation of violence

Anglophone Cameroon's Demands

- Return to the federal constitution of 1961: equal states
- Application of the "Common law" Anglo-Saxon judicial system and the use of English in courts
- Use of English in schools and have students taught by English speakers
- The ongoing crisis started with strikes by lawyers and teachers

Major Anglophone Parties/Organizations

- The Social Democratic Front (SDF); major opposition party, founded in 1990
- The Southern Cameroons National Council (SCNC), founded in 1995
- SCNC-affiliated Southern Cameroons Youth League (SCYL)
- Ambazonia Liberation Party (ALIP), founded in 2004 in the US

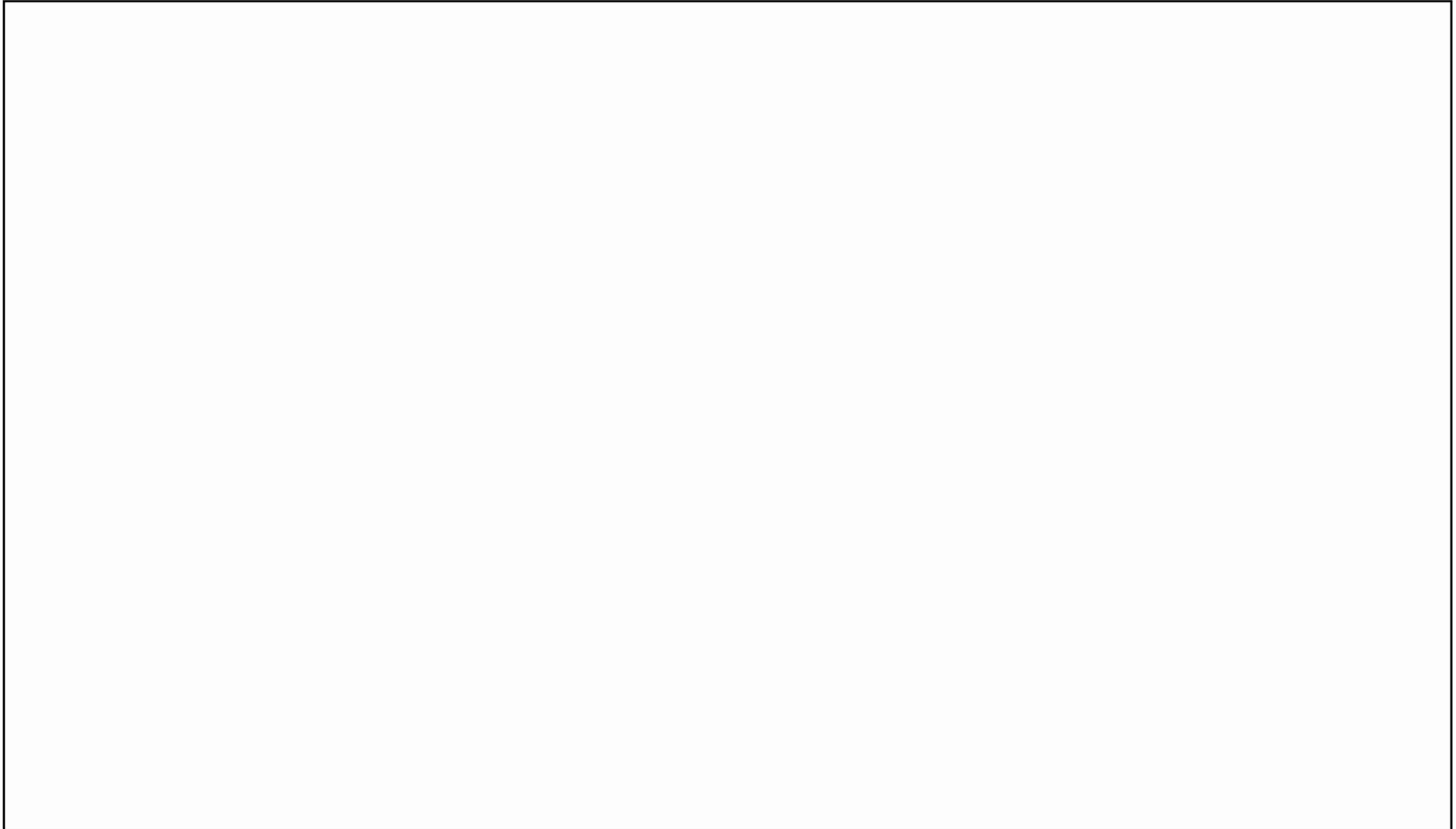
The Southern Cameroons National Council (SCNC)



- Advocates for secession
- Banned in January 2017
- SCNC and SCYL activists (not regular members) may be arrested
- SCNC and SCYL generally march on October 1 (“Independence Day”)

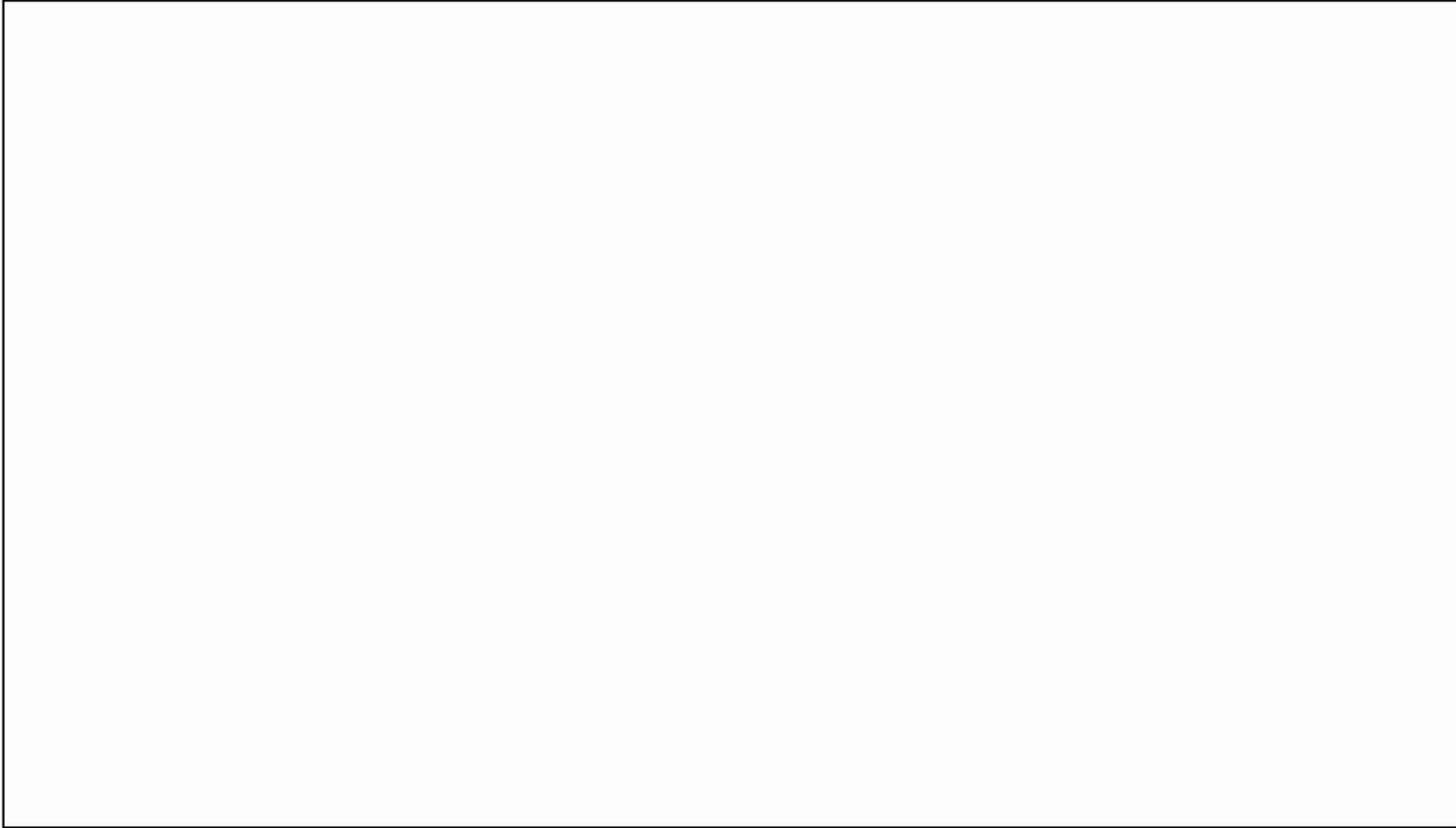
Rebel Groups and Militias

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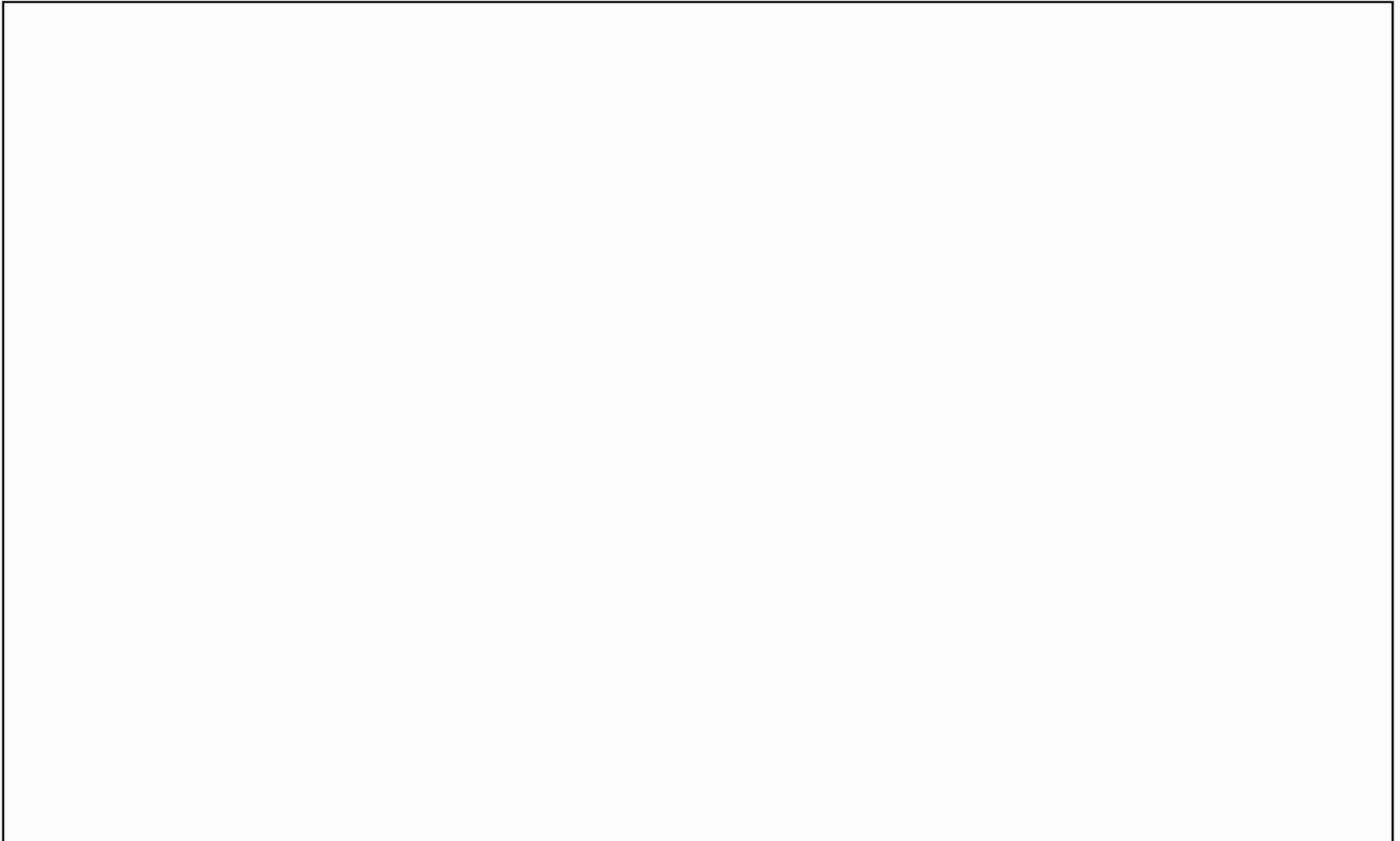
The Ambazonia Defense Forces (ADF)

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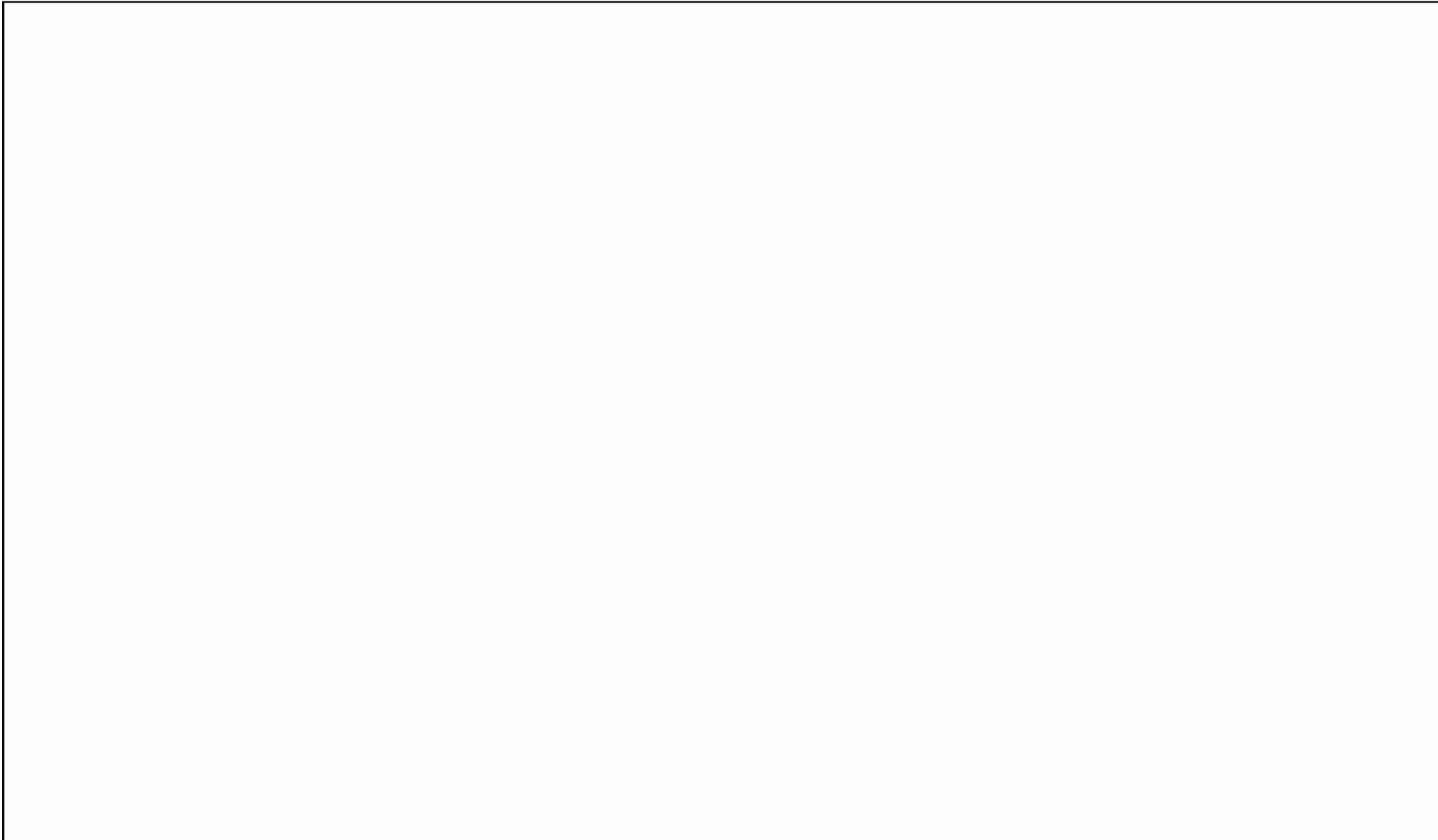
Targets of Rebels/Self-Defense Groups

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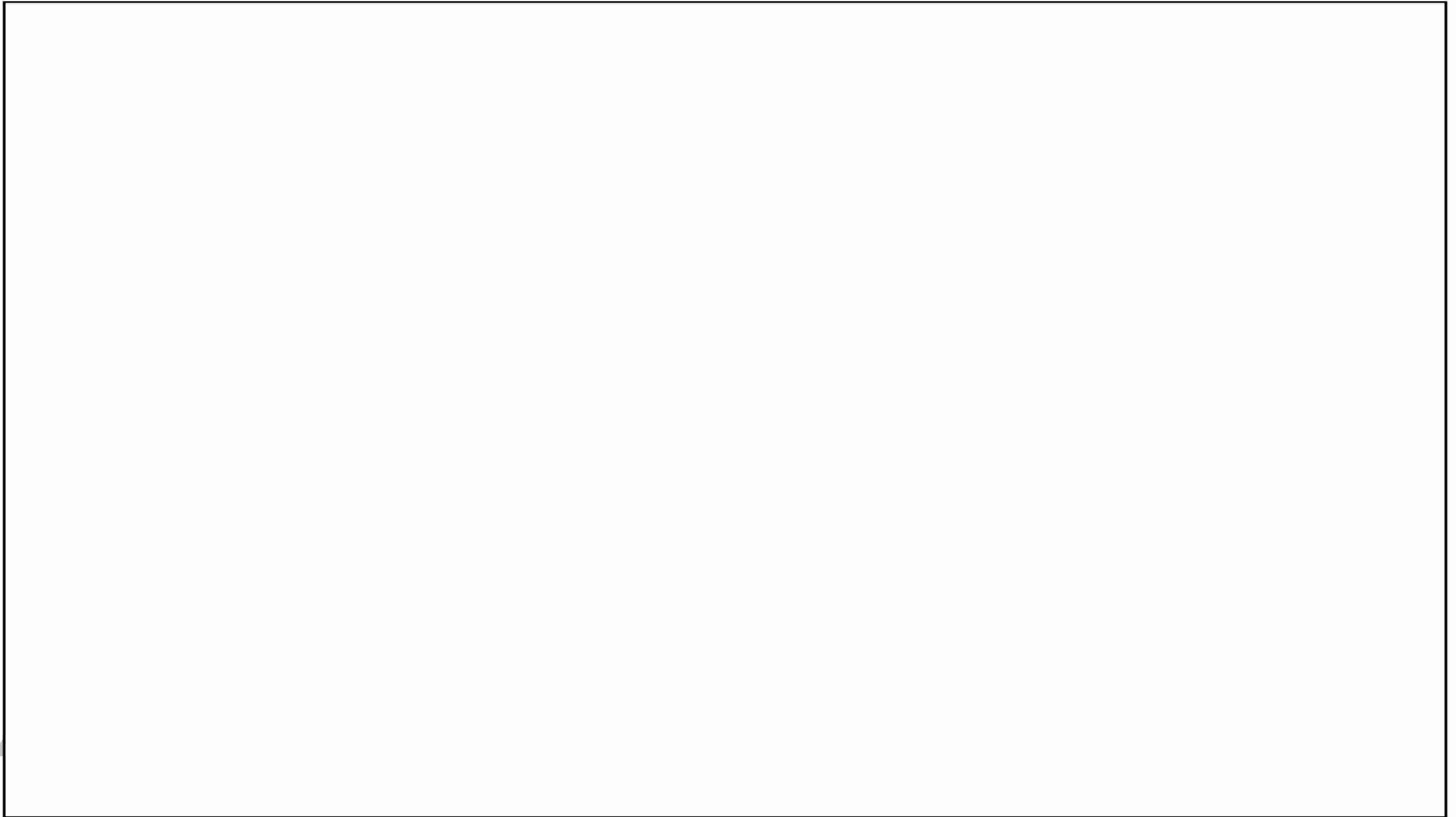
Who are the Security Forces?

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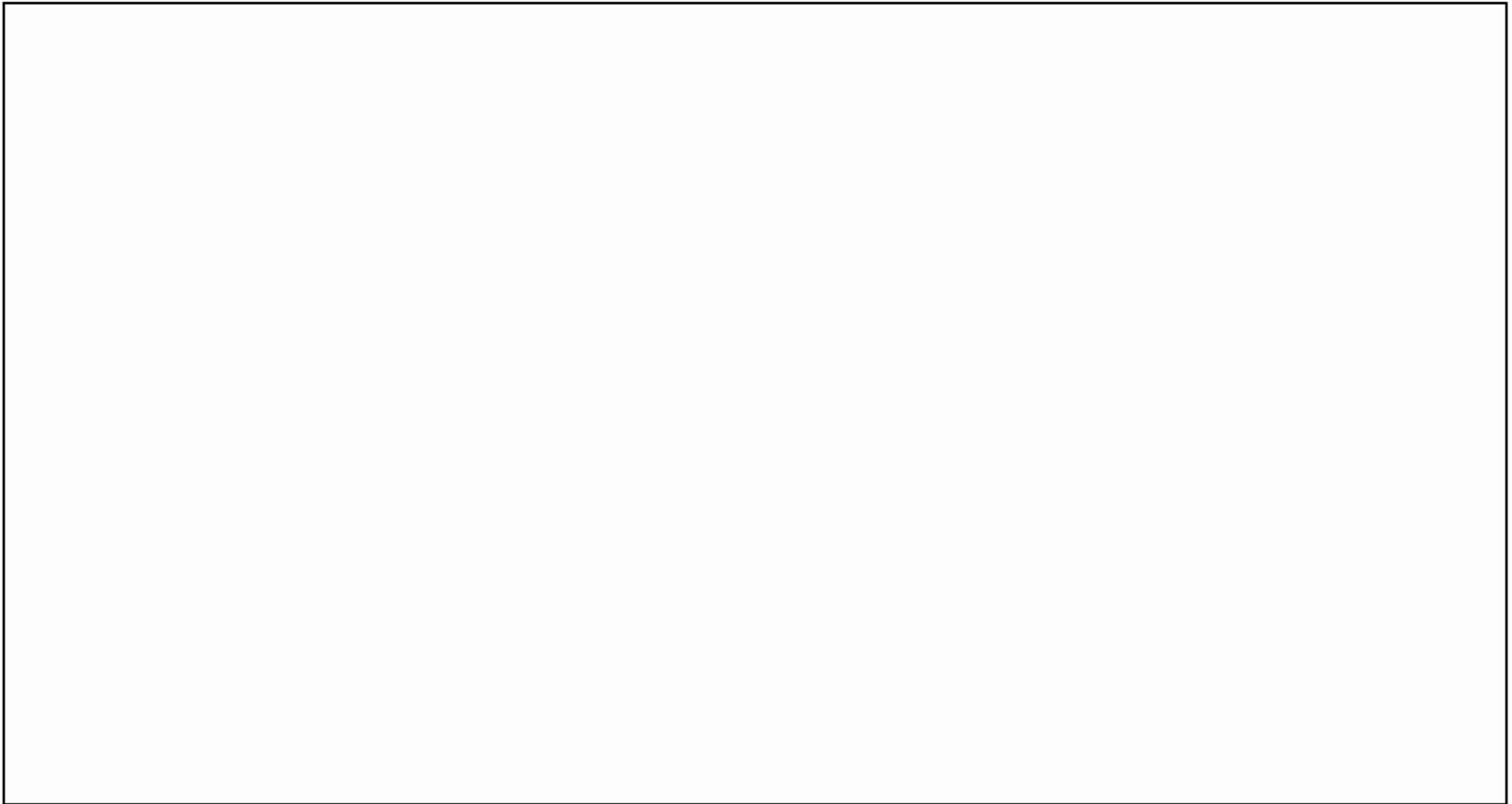
Security – Chain of Command

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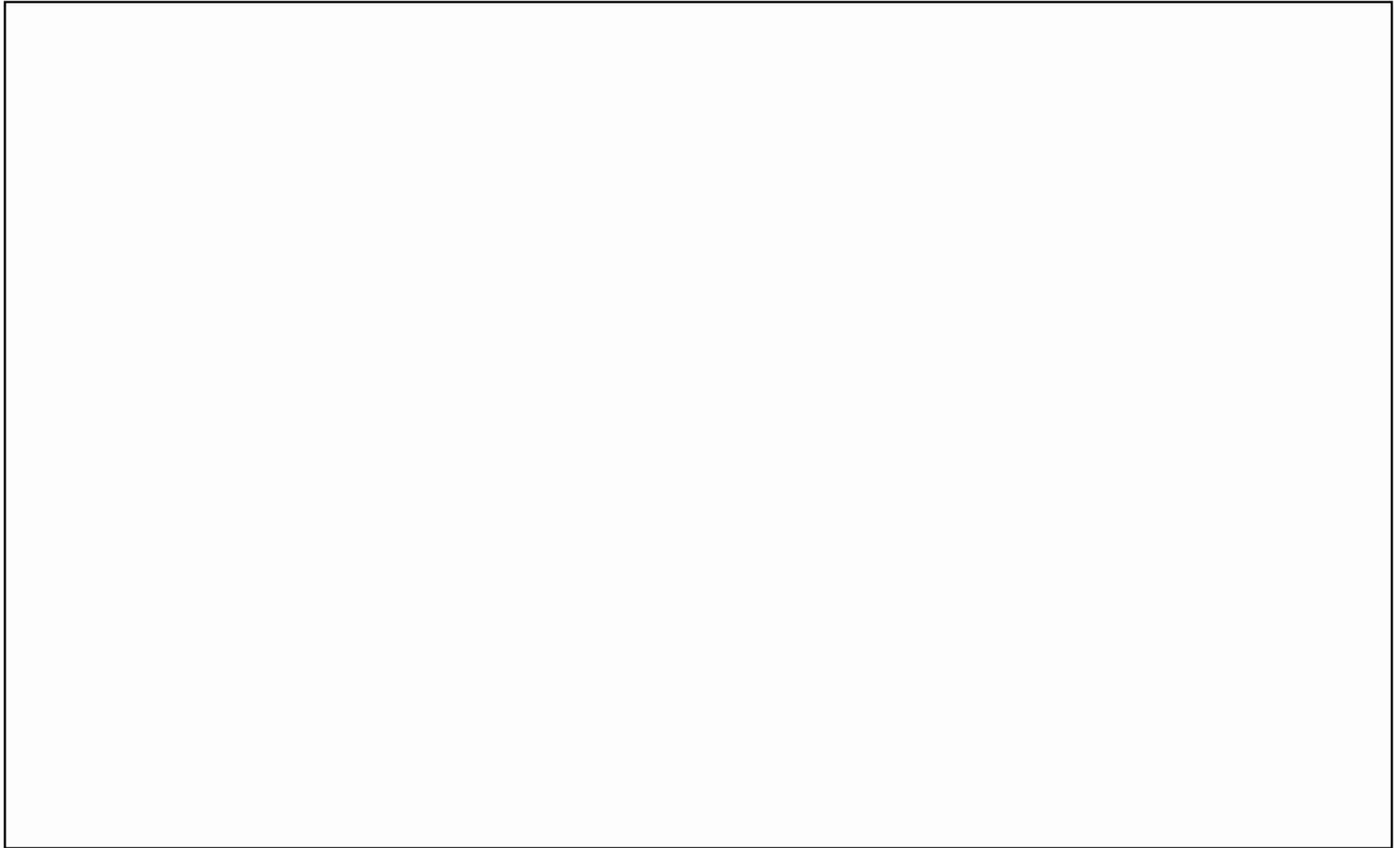
Who are the targets of Security Forces

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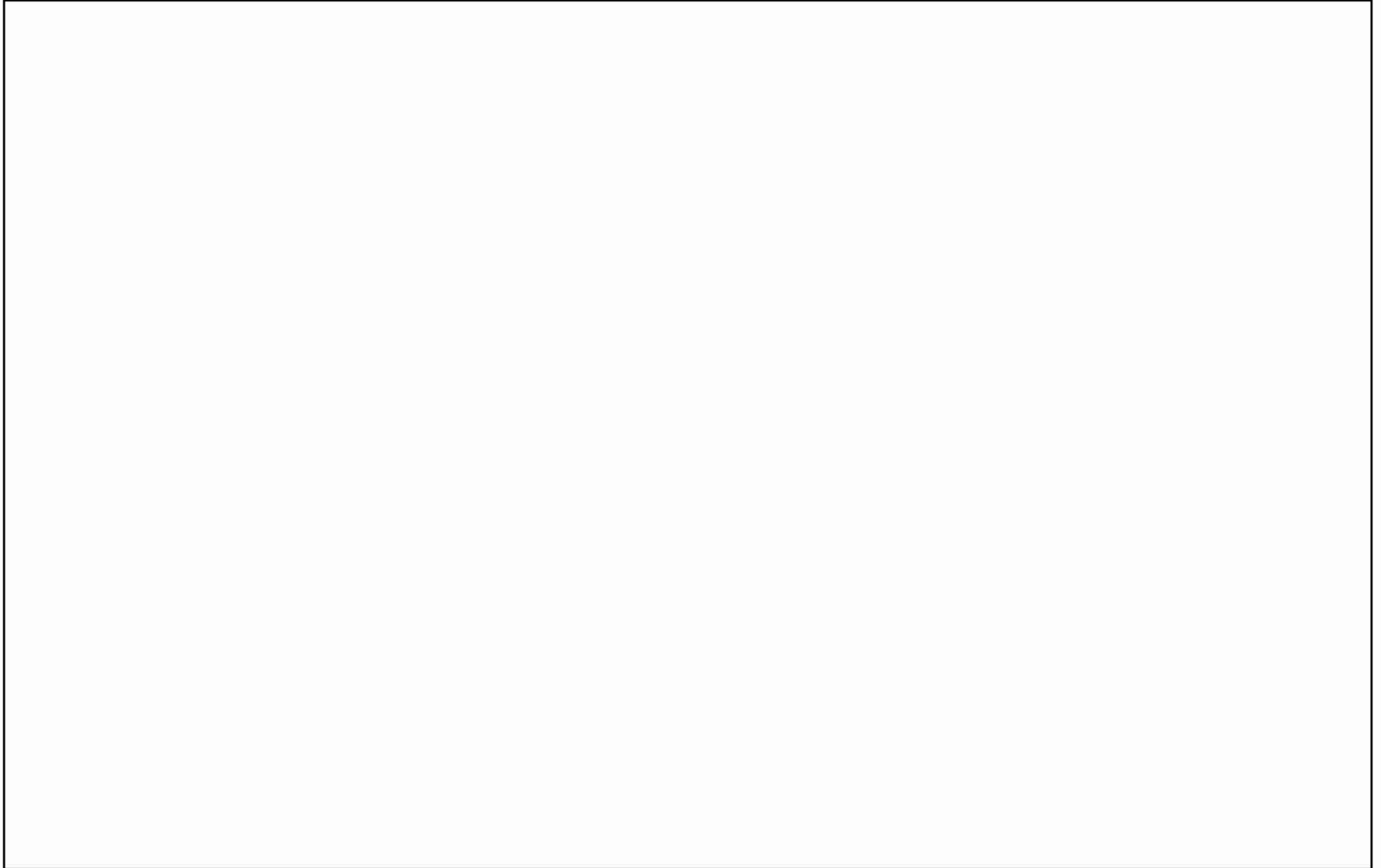
Cameroon Renaissance Movement (CRM)

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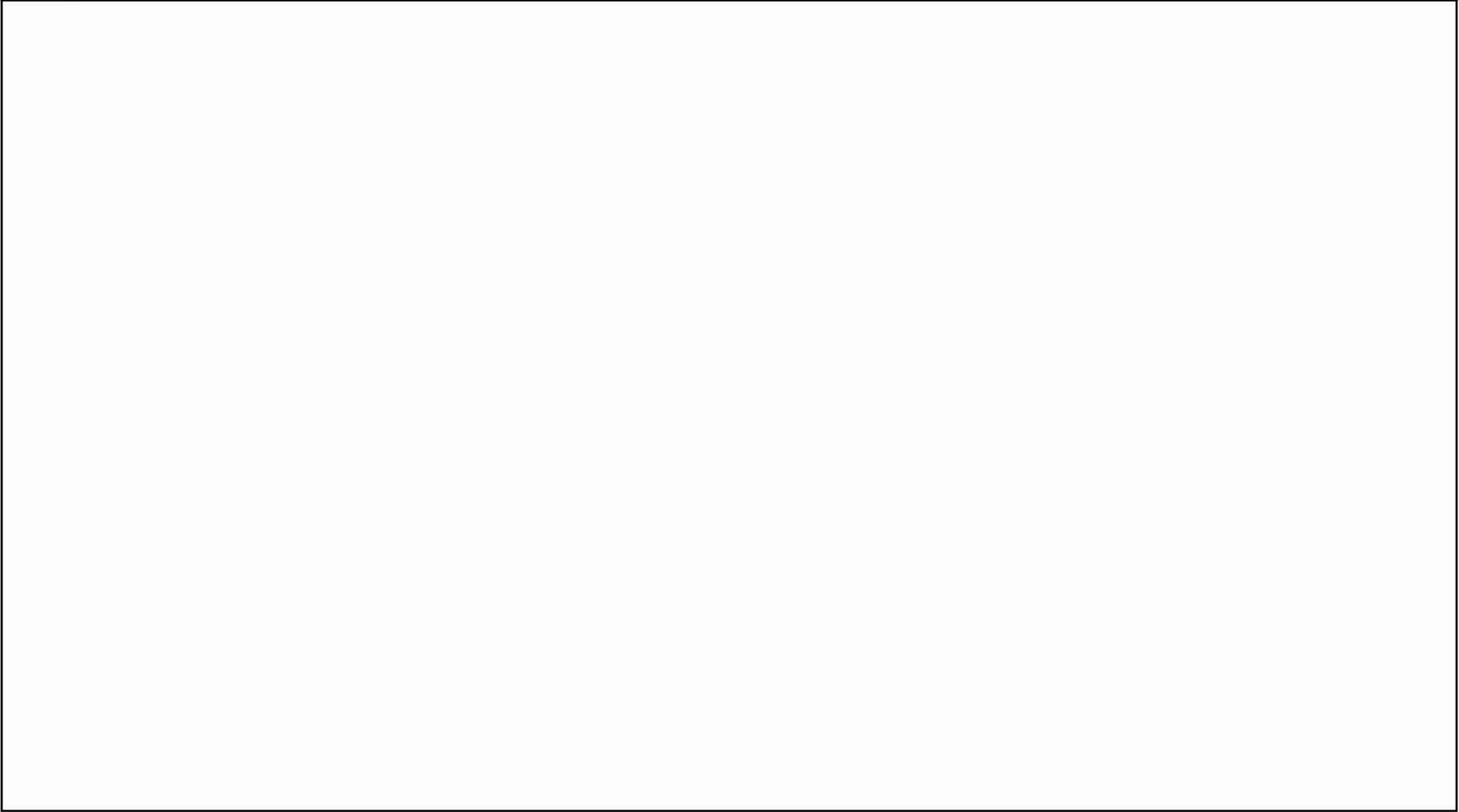
Corruption within Security Forces

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Francophone and Anglophone military leaders

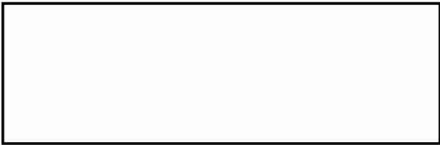
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Checkpoints at the Border between the Anglophone and francophone regions

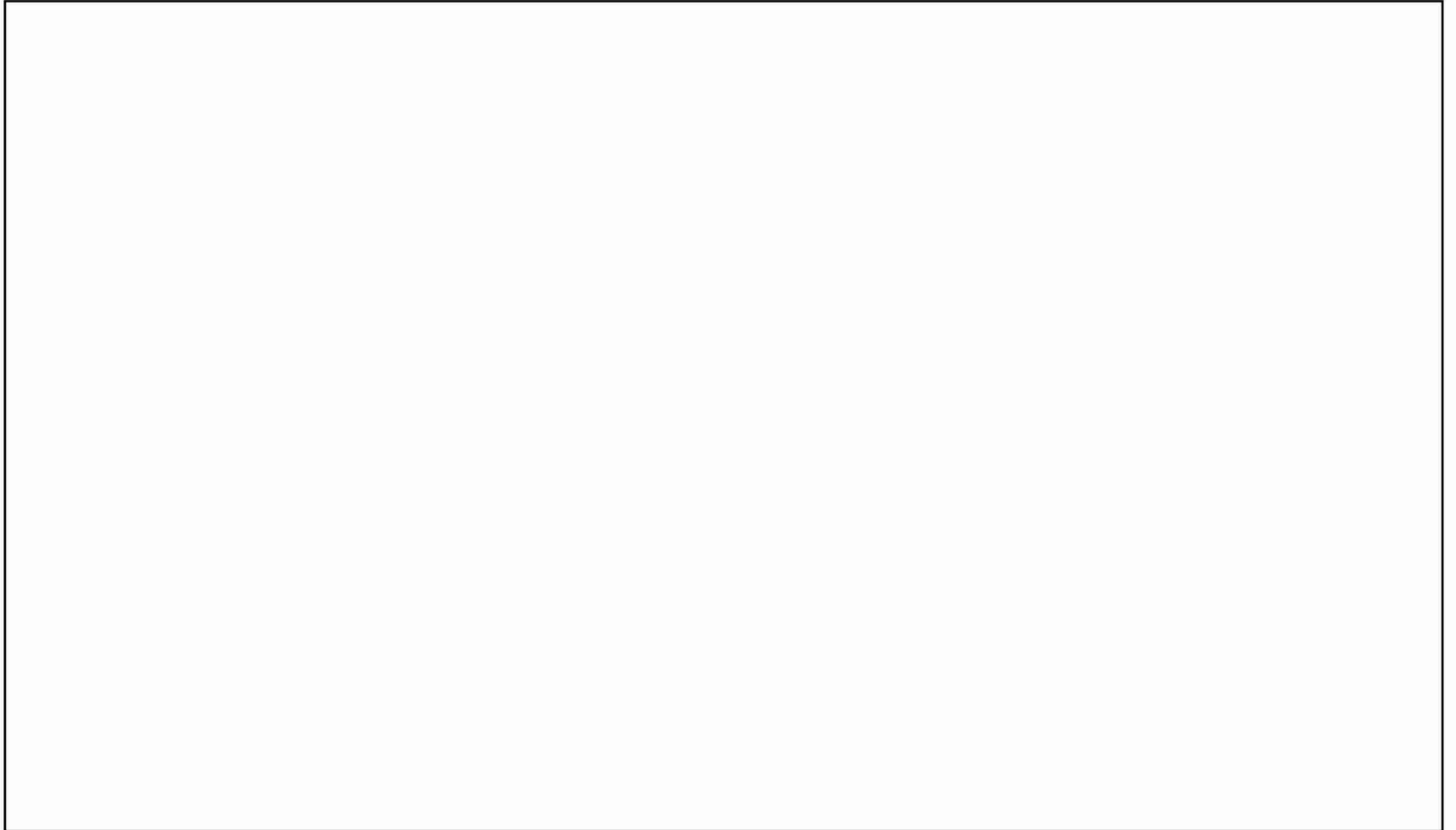
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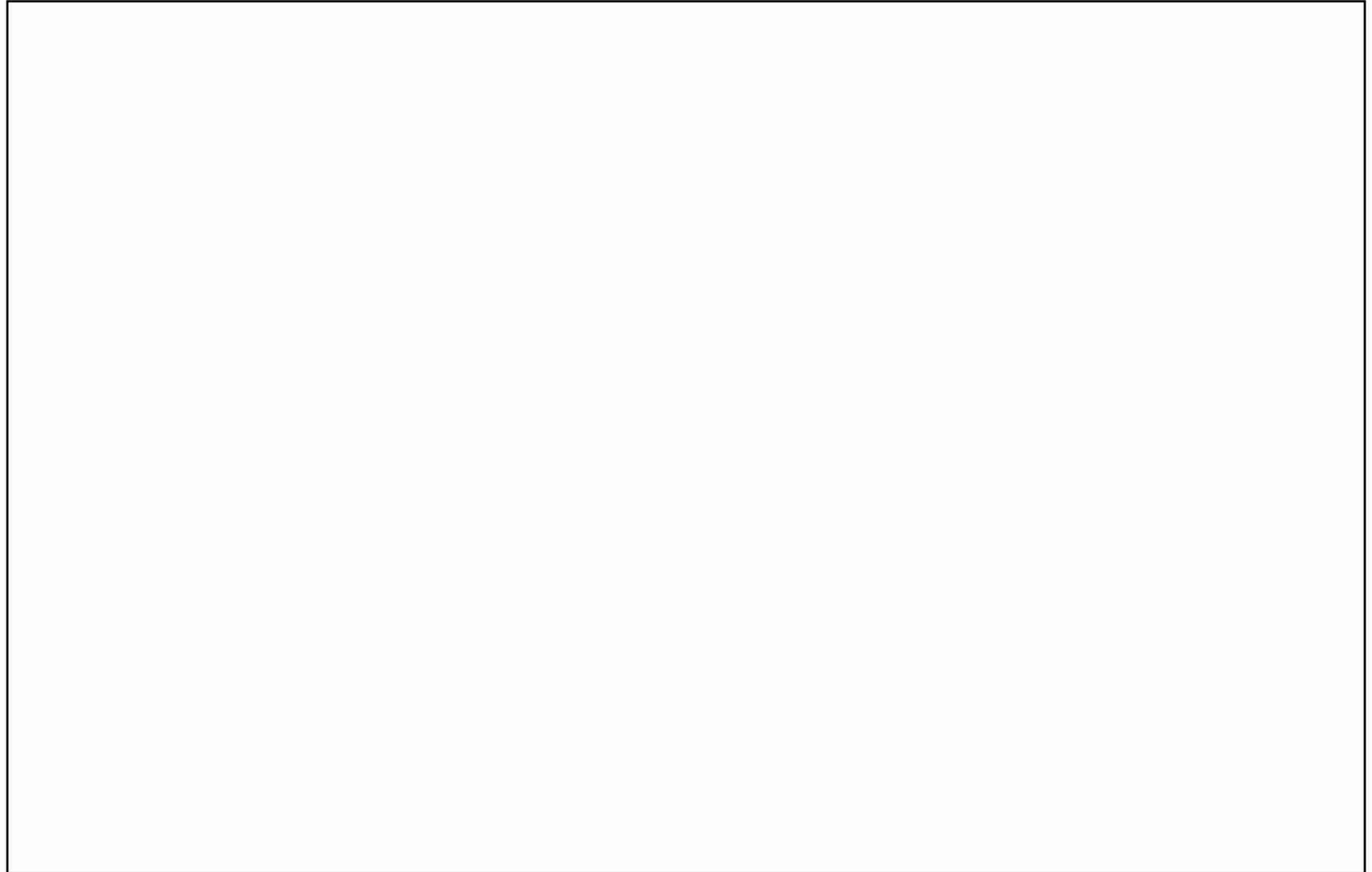
people flying out of Douala

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How to Obtain Travel Documents

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Are Anglophone IDPs Welcomed in Douala and Yaoundé?



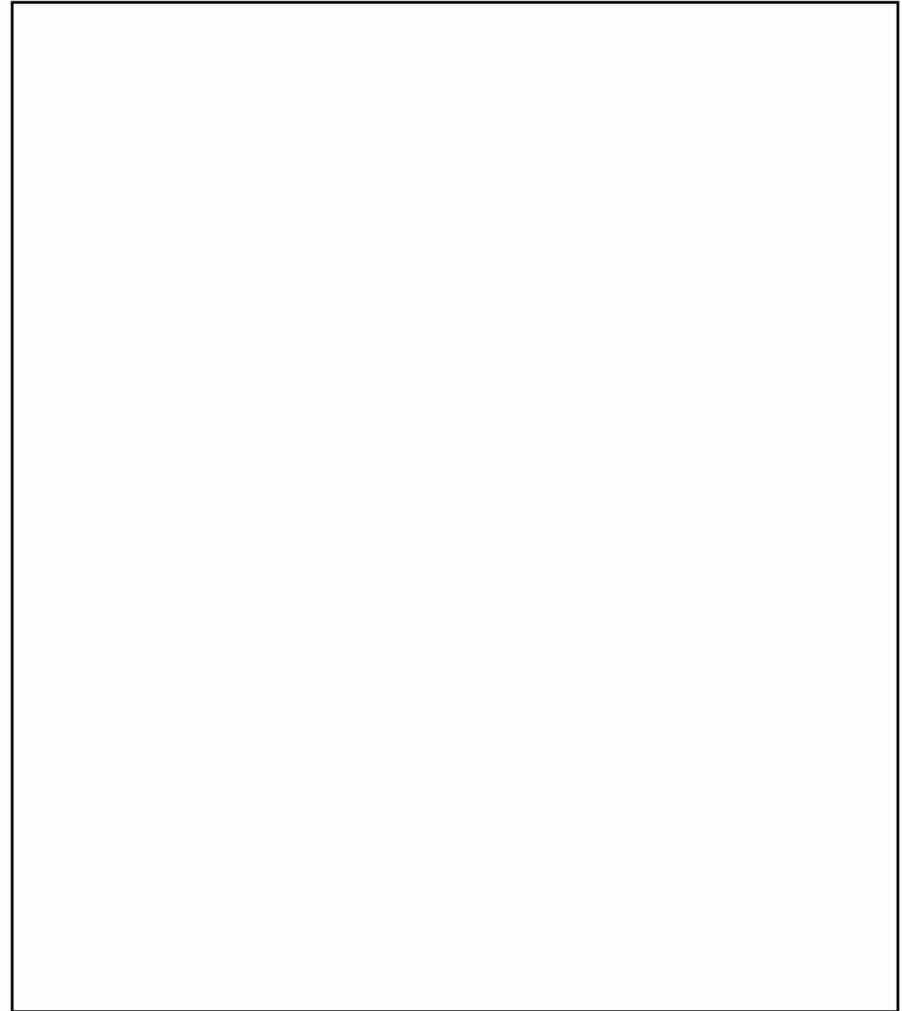
- IDPs are overall well received by the Francophone population

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Types of Violations by Security Forces in Western Cameroon

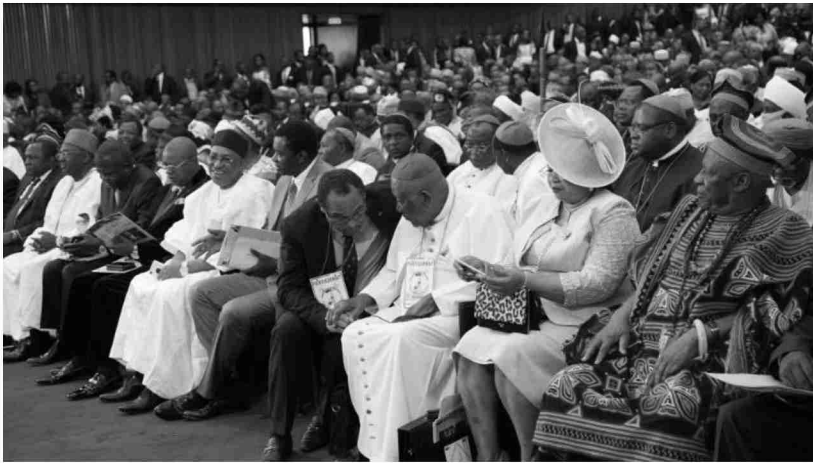
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Boko Haram in far North Region (b)(7)(e)



National Dialogue to end the conflict in the English-Speaking Cameroon



National Dialogue

- The adoption of a special status for the two Anglophone regions
- The election of the government delegate (not governors) to whom mayor report
- The rapid integration of ex-combatants into society
- The name of the country be returned to former name, the United Republic of Cameroon

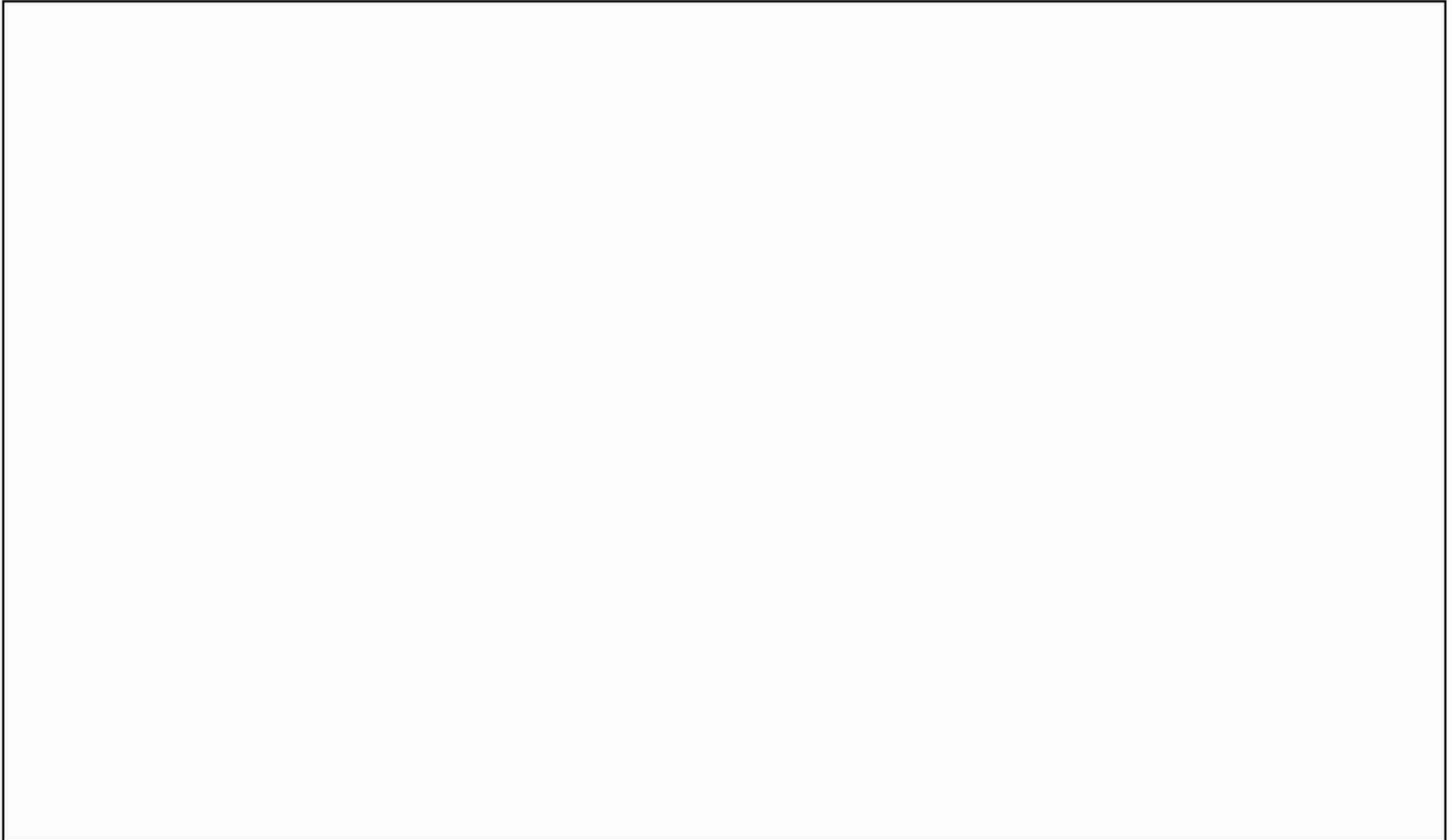
Internal Relocation

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Cameroon: What to Take Away

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For More Questions?

Submit query to the RAI0 Research Unit,
RAI0Research@uscis.dhs.gov