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STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT MAURICE KAMTO ON THE DEADLY CLASHES BETWEEN MUSGUM AND CHOA ARAB COMMUNITIES IN THE LOGONE AND CHARI DIVISION, FAR NORTH REGION

AN AVOIDABLE CRISIS

For the past week, the Logone and Chari division, and more precisely the municipality of Logone Birni, a peaceful locality where several communities have been living together, has become a huge scene of conflict, with an outpouring of violence that has caused nearly 30 deaths and many injuries.

This division is characterised by the notoriously difficult access to natural resources, which in the past has been the cause of crises as deadly as the one that is currently taking place. However, this time, the irreparable damage was avoidable. Indeed, the technical means of communication now allow us to act quickly and effectively to contain foreseeable crises such as the one we are experiencing in this part of our country. Unfortunately, since the current conflict between the Musgum and Choa Arab communities over a waterhole broke out, the silence of the CPDM elite, the party in power, which excels in exploiting tribal antagonisms, and of the administration, which is always quick to find and repress any activity of the CRM with hateful brutality, has been glaring and raises questions.

The D.O., the S.D.O. and the Governor, who are territorially competent, did not provide the urgent and adequate solution required by this explosive situation.

The CRM vigorously denounces this trivialisation of death and the contempt of the current regime for the Cameroonian people, and in particular for the populations in conflict. The Logone Birni subdivision is located 25 km from the town of Kousseri; nothing prevented the authorities from setting up an interposition force and calling on the CPDM elite, who were quietly holding their meeting to renew the basic organs of their party on the same day that the two communities were killing each other, to contribute to appeasing them.

Obviously, what interests these elites and other CPDM militants are their privileges and other situations of profitability that their militancy in this party of predation guarantees them.

One wonders why the Governor of the Far North Region took such a late approach to such a dramatic situation.

Why summon the lamibés of Guidiguis, Mokolo, and Maroua for a problem in Kousseri when influential community leaders within each of the conflicting parties are known and available?

The administration should have been concerned with the problems of fishing and agriculture between the communities in the division concerned rather than playing the belated and misguided fireman.

WE KNOW THE ADAGE: GOVERNING MEANS ANTICIPATING.

It is time that the issues that are at the root of this new crisis between the two clashing communities are addressed in depth, without the usual political manipulations of the ruling party. The CPDM and the administration, which is unfortunately following in the footsteps of this party, must stop pitting the communities against each other. The invocation of PEACE should not be a cover for the inability of the ruling party to preserve a harmonious coexistence among the Cameroonian people.

It is imperative to set up a Commission which will be responsible for implementing the recommendations which will emerge from the general diagnosis which it is urgent to make coldly, with the sole aim of building social cohesion.

It is to be deplored that, once again, the Government has kept away from a pressing national problem, thus confirming that the fate of the Cameroonian people is not its priority. More seriously, the one who is supposed to be the guarantor of national cohesion, the President of the Republic in office, officially on a "short private trip to Europe", shows a superb indifference to this tragedy. This attitude must speak to the families of the deceased victims, to whom the CRM offers its sincere condolences, to which I add my own, while at the same time we wish the injured a speedy recovery. To the two communities left to their own devices, we wish to quickly heal the wounds of this serious crisis and urge them to open their arms wide to each other to sow peace in the hearts of present and future generations. It is with all Cameroonians that the Far North mourns the preventable deaths.

The CRM remains convinced that whatever the dispute, dialogue is the only intelligent solution. It urges the elites of both communities to contribute to the peaceful and lasting resolution of this conflict by showing fraternity, patriotism, and ingenuity to stop the clashes and re-establish dialogue between the two parties.

Done in Yaoundé, on 14 August 2021

The National President

Maurice KAMTO