

Cameroonian youths marching for peace

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Prior to the 20th May celebration, Cameroonian youths marched the streets of Yaounde on May 19 to promote the culture of peace in their own little way. They carried banners and wore Tee-shirts bearing messages of peace, unity and development. There were also messages on the fight against the illicit proliferation of arms and rising insecurity in our major urban set-ups. Youth groups such as Cameroon Youths and Students Forum for Peace (CAMYOSFOP) and Action Jeunesse Verte Camerounaise (AJVC) took the frontline initiative to rally the youths to march. The youths came out as early as 7 am at various rallying points such Melen and Carrefour Nlongkak. Before midday, the exercise was practically through.

Talking to Ndi Mercy Nshie, PRO for CAMYOSFOP, she sounded very positive about the turnout and gave reasons for the unity march. She doubles as the first Deputy Commonwealth Youth Representative, Cameroon Ministry of Youth Affairs.

“You know, we are here from all over, drawn from different backgrounds. The march is significant because it calls for the unity of Cameroon, which we have to maintain as young people and as leaders of today and tomorrow. The march is there to remind us of ‘who’ we are...the need to maintain peace and unity. CAMYOSFOP started from the VI District. That is Melen. And we marched right up to the 20th May Boulevard. The young people were happy, they sang songs of joy, songs of campaign for peace and the general reaction was good. People watched and I think the message really went across...” she said.

Sampling the opinions of other youths, who took part in the marching, they were happy that Cameroon is relatively peaceful. Ngwabe Mabel, AJVC member, was really happy with the fact that since she was born war has never broken out in Cameroon. Djadeu Colette, a student at ASMAC, maintained that peace is a great treasure that Cameroon must preserve and she further advocates for all Cameroonians to unite in peace with the 20 May celebration.

As an NGO whose major preoccupation is to educate youths, students and the general public on their moral and traditional values and the peaceful resolutions of conflicts, CAMYOSFOP has worked relentlessly to promote the culture of peace in Cameroon. Of late, CAMYOSFOP is staging a strong campaign against war toys, firecrackers, small arms and violent films within the youth milieu in Cameroon. Well, how have youths reacted towards this campaign? The answer they say is living in all men or is blowing I the wind. As today’s leaders preparing for tomorrow, Cameroonian youths should take the challenge to champion the peace process in Africa.