For the Rule of Law, Genuine Democracy and a Dignified Future for All

REPUBLICAN CONTRACT

— CHARTER —

FOR POOLING THE FORCES OF DEMOCRATIC AND PEACEFUL CHANGE IN CAMEROON

Code of Conduct for the Political Opposition, Civil Society and Media Committed to Free, Fair, Credible and Transparent Municipal, Regional, Legislative, Senatorial and Presidential Elections.

PREAMBLE

The Assessment, the Lessons and the Purpose of the Republican Contract.

Cameroon is going through a decisive period in its history. After several decades of concentrated power, stolen elections, unfairly distributed wealth, weakened institutions and eroded freedoms, which have deeply wounded our nation, the people are thirsting for change as never before. Cameroonians aspire to justice, transparency, genuine democracy and a State that serves them, not the other way round. Faced with poverty that has become endemic, the people cherish the dream of a better future.

The forces of change exist; indeed, they are numerous, talented, deeply rooted and determined, within the political class as well as in Civil Society, the Media and the Diaspora.

Yet these forces have never succeeded in winning officially, not for lack of courage, commitment, strategy or legitimacy, but for lack of a genuine union of forces built on sincerity, honesty, respect for one's word, discipline, method and mutual respect among the actors. As a result, no opposition alliance has truly succeeded since 1992. Alliances of convenience have replaced lasting commitments, and even these have so far failed to deliver the expected results. The lessons of the National Coordination of 1991, the Union for Change of 1992, the Coalition for National Reconciliation of 2004, the G7 of 2011, which led to the Republican Pact of 2012, and finally the Consensus Candidacy Movement of 2025 speak for themselves. They call on us not to resign ourselves, but to change our formula and our method, in the firm conviction that pooling the forces, experience and resources of the political opposition, Civil Society and the Media committed to change in our country remains the true solution. It is in this spirit that the Cameroon Democratic Union (CDU) presents this Republican Contract as a genuine platform for pooling the forces of change. Its operation is governed by the provisions of this Charter, known as the REPUBLICAN CONTRACT, which breaks new ground by setting out clearly the commitments, rights and duties of the pooling Members and the sanctions that apply in the event of duly established failures or breaches, both for intermediate elections, namely municipal, regional, legislative and senatorial elections, and for the presidential election. For it is not enough to come together for a cause; above all, we must make sure that the common rules binding each and every one of us are clear, transparent and accepted in advance.

> *"The Republican Contract is born of this imperative: to unite without merging, to bring together without absorbing, to open up without naivety, and to build together a national movement capable of carrying change."* **Hon. Tomaino Ndam Njoya,** National President of the Cameroon Democratic Union (CDU)

The Republican Contract is therefore intended as a framework in which each of the committed Political Parties, Civil Society Members and Media retains its identity, trusts the others, respects the rules laid down in this Charter and the decisions and resolutions duly adopted, and works jointly towards the goal of democratic and peaceful change in Cameroon through free, fair and transparent elections.

It defines who may become a Member of the Republican Contract, what each Member contributes, what each may expect in return, the rules of electoral cooperation, the safeguards against opportunism, infiltration and absorption, the obligations of nominated elected officials, and the political consequences of any duly established failure or breach.

This document is a moral, political and strategic commitment. Its strength rests on respect for one's word, accountability to the people of Cameroon and the conviction that a change of government can only be won together, with the contribution of each and every one.

PART I

NATURE, PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES OF THE REPUBLICAN CONTRACT

Article 1. Nature and Identity of the Republican Contract

The Republican Contract is a republican, civic, electoral and strategic political platform intended to bring together the forces sincerely and actively committed to a democratic, peaceful and republican transfer of power in Cameroon.

It is indeed the duty of all republican, patriotic and democratic Cameroonian men and women to commit, in all conscience, to:

1. Choose those who will exercise State power;
2. Decide on the programmes put forward for the country's development;
3. Hold all those who govern and manage public affairs to account;
4. Apply sanctions without discrimination;
5. Thereby shield Cameroon from the power struggles and open conflicts that afflict so many African countries.

It is open to Political Parties, Civil Society Organisations, Media and independent public figures who subscribe to this Charter and undertake to abide by it.

The Republican Contract does not erase the distinct identity of the signatory Organisations. Each Member retains its history, structures, activists, symbols and internal autonomy, insofar as these do not conflict with the common commitments.

Article 2. Purpose of the Republican Contract.

The purpose of the Republican Contract is to unite the forces of change around a common republican foundation for the municipal, regional, legislative, senatorial and presidential elections, in order to maximise the chances of victory for a democratic and peaceful political transition in Cameroon through:

1. Pooling teams, resources and experience so that the opposition can field the strongest possible candidates, ideally in every constituency, and thereby prevent the ruling Party from winning uncontested in many constituencies at municipal and legislative elections, as has been the case until now;
2. Fielding joint lists of candidates in certain constituencies at municipal, regional, legislative and senatorial elections, on the basis of specific agreements duly signed by the Members;
3. Promoting a consensus opposition candidate for the presidential election;
4. Pooling human, material and financial resources, as well as experience, to ensure optimal, effective and efficient monitoring of the vote;
5. A commitment to act as a united front within representative republican institutions such as Parliament, the Regional Councils and others;
6. Active solidarity in any political cause concerning a Member.[1]

[1] Le contrat républicain (The Republican Contract) by Dr Adamou Ndam Njoya, L'Harmattan, 2011

PART II

INITIATIVE AND MEMBERSHIP

Article 3. Initiative, Membership and Loss of Membership

3.1 Initiative

The CDU is the Initiator of this Republican Contract and a Member in that capacity.

3.2 Membership

Membership is open to any Political Party, Civil Society Organisation, Media outlet or Public Figure that subscribes to this Charter.

3.3. Loss of Membership

Membership may be withdrawn from any Political Party, Civil Society Organisation, media outlet or public figure in the event of a serious and duly established breach of its commitments, after notification of the grounds, an opportunity to respond and a reasoned decision of the Council of Leaders.

Membership also ends upon resignation, dissolution of the Organisation or death of the individual. Any decision to exclude a Member may be challenged through an internal appeal.

PART III

RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF MEMBERS

Article 4. Rights and Duties of Political Parties

1. Signatory Political Parties

The signatory Political Parties form the political backbone of the Republican Contract.

They have the right to:

- Retain their identity, activists and structures.
- Take part in all activities of the Republican Contract and share in their outcomes, including electoral results.
- Count on the solidarity of the other Members.

They have a duty to:

- Place their political experience and local roots at the service of the common movement.
- Mobilise their grassroots supporters and put forward credible, locally rooted and loyal candidates.
- Take part in designing and implementing the common electoral strategy.
- Contribute to collective decisions and respect the internal rulings of the Republican Contract.
- Train their activists in the rules, values and requirements of the Republican Contract.
- Publicly defend the decisions and the candidates who have joined the Republican Contract.

Specific Commitments

- Not to use the Republican Contract merely as a tool for visibility without making a real contribution.
- Not to field competing candidates where constituency agreements have been concluded.
- Not to poach activists from other signatory Parties by unfair means.
- Not to negotiate secretly with the ruling regime to the detriment of the common movement.

- To respect the rulings of the Republican Contract on nominations, even when these are not in their favour.

Article 5. Rights and Duties of Civil Society Organisations and Trade Unions

2. Civil Society Organisations and Trade Unions

Citizens' Movements, Civil Society Organisations and Trade Unions bring the Republican Contract non-partisan legitimacy and an irreplaceable capacity for grassroots mobilisation.

They have the right to:

- Retain their statutory autonomy, independence and freedom of expression.
- Take part in consultations and propose citizens' initiatives.
- Benefit from the solidarity of Members and have access to mediation mechanisms.

They have a duty to:

- Contribute to civic education, voter awareness and the defence of civil rights.
- Take part, in line with their missions, in democratic oversight and in reflection on public policy.
- Honour freely undertaken commitments, non-violence and the rules of the Charter.

Specific Commitments

- To respect the republican character of the Republican Contract and avoid any partisan manipulation.
- To coordinate their actions with the competent bodies before any major public initiative.
- To guard against any manipulation by foreign interests or interests opposed to change.

Article 6. Rights and Duties of the Media

3. The Media

Signatory Media contribute to informing the public, to civic education and to a vibrant democratic debate, with due respect for their editorial independence.

They have the right to:

- Preserve their editorial freedom, editorial line and professional ethics.
- Have fair access to the information and public activities of the Republican Contract.
- Refuse any instruction contrary to journalistic ethics and freely exercise their right to criticise.

They have a duty to:

- Check facts, distinguish between news, opinion and political communication, and respect pluralism.
- Protect human dignity, the right of reply and the presumption of innocence.
- Declare conflicts of interest and refrain from knowingly disseminating misleading information.

Specific Commitments

- Any political or campaign communication service shall be subject to a separate and transparent agreement.
- Membership of the Republican Contract entails no obligation of editorial support or favourable coverage.

Article 7. Rights and Duties of Independent Public Figures

4. Independent Public Figures

Independent Public Figures, whether academics, intellectuals, lawyers, economists, artists, entrepreneurs, traditional leaders, athletes, religious leaders or other recognised public figures, bring the Republican Contract their credibility and their particular networks.

They have the right to:

- Retain their freedom of thought, independence and public identity.
- Take part in the work of the Contract, submit proposals and be consulted on decisions that concern them.
- Benefit from the mediation and appeal mechanisms provided for in the Charter.

They have a duty to:

- Contribute to the work in good faith and honour the commitments they have freely accepted.
- Preserve the confidentiality of internal deliberations and prevent conflicts of interest.
- Act in keeping with republican principles, ethics and non-violence.

Specific Commitments

- To respect collective decisions without placing their public profile above the common framework.
- To avoid unilateral initiatives that could undermine the strategy of the Republican Contract.
- Not to use their Participation to negotiate personal advantages.
- To act loyally towards all Signatory Parties, before, during and after the elections.

PART IV

NOMINATIONS, CANDIDACIES AND ELECTORAL STRATEGY

Rules for internal competition and collective discipline

Article 8. General Principle

The Republican Contract may support joint candidates, joint lists, consensus candidacies or withdrawal strategies, depending on local circumstances and national objectives. No candidacy is an automatic right. Every candidacy supported by the Republican Contract must meet the tests of electoral credibility, genuine local roots, public integrity and proven loyalty.

Article 9. Candidate Selection Criteria

CRITERIA	CONTENT AND VERIFICATION
Genuine local roots	Recognised presence in the constituency, not merely claimed
Personal credibility	Public reputation, verifiable track record, no compromising history
Public integrity	No corrupt practices and no organic ties to the ruling regime
Mobilisation capacity	Number of verifiable supporters who can be mobilised, local networks, logistical capacity
Mandate plan	Written local programme, clear vision, defined priorities for the term of office
Loyalty to the Republican Contract	Documented contribution to the activities of the Republican Contract before applying for nomination
Representativeness	Gender, generational and territorial balance according to the needs of the constituency
Experience	Relevant electoral, professional or community experience

Article 10. Conditions for Electoral Nomination

MANDATORY, NON-NEGOTIABLE CONDITIONS FOR NOMINATION

1. Membership in accordance with the provisions of this Charter.
2. Documented participation in the activities of the Republican Contract.
3. Submission of a written Mandate Plan: local programme, vision, priorities and action plan.
4. Signature of a Mandate Agreement binding the candidate to the Republican Contract before, during and after the elections.
5. A Solemn Declaration to abide by the Charter of the Republican Contract.
6. Where applicable, moral sponsorship by at least two (2) recognised Members of the Republican Contract in the constituency.
7. A written undertaking not to join the opposing regime or a rival Party within 24 months of the election.

Article 11. The Mandate Agreement: the Key Safeguard Against Opportunism

The Mandate Agreement is a document signed by the candidate and the Initiator of the Republican Contract before any official nomination. It is the main safeguard against post-election opportunism.

MANDATORY CONTENT OF THE MANDATE AGREEMENT

- **BEFORE**: campaign obligations, contribution to shared costs, adherence to the strategy, prohibition of any unauthorised competing candidacy.
- **DURING**: protecting the vote, reporting results, safeguarding polling stations, coordinating with the Republican Contract teams.
- **AFTER**: six-monthly report, financial contribution to the Republican Contract, involvement of the Republican Contract in local achievements, Participation in national bodies.
- **END OF TERM**: full performance review; no re-election bid under another banner without agreement.
- **IN THE EVENT OF BETRAYAL**: political sanctions, financial compensation, public notice to the voters of the constituency.

Article 12. Placement on Electoral Lists

Placement on joint lists takes into account the actual political weight of the Parties, length of commitment, the candidate's competence and local roots, territorial, generational and gender balance, and the real chances of victory. No actor may demand a top position without serious political justification and without a consensus agreement in accordance with the provisions of this Charter.

Article 13. Commitments if Not Selected

Any prospective candidate who is not selected shall respect the decision taken. He or she shall refrain from standing against the supported candidate, sabotaging the campaign, disclosing internal information or joining an opposing force out of resentment. In return, the Republican Contract shall publicly acknowledge his or her contribution and consider other forms of political responsibility.

PART V

ORGANISATION AND OPERATION OF THE REPUBLICAN CONTRACT

Institutional architecture and internal governance.

Article 14. The Council of Leaders

The Council of Leaders is made up of the Presidents of the Member Political Parties, two (02) representatives of Civil Society Organisations, one (01) representative of the Media and one (01) public figure of established standing, each having presented proof of legal existence. The Council of Leaders is the governing body of the Republican Contract. It may be assisted by a technical secretariat that it establishes.

PART VI

TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS

Article 15. Amendment of the Republican Contract

This Republican Contract may be amended at the request of the Council of Leaders with the approval of the Initiating Party of the Republican Contract.

Article 16. Force and Scope of the Republican Contract

The Republican Contract is a moral, political and strategic commitment. Its strength rests on the Word given, the Loyalty of the signatories and the Accountability of each to the People of Cameroon. It enters into force upon its adoption and signature.

Having read all the Provisions of this Charter, the Signatory declares that they freely subscribe to it and undertakes to respect its Principles and Obligations.

Signed at……..…….., on……/……/20..…..…..

THE SIGNATORY

Name / Organisation

……

SIGNATURE / STAMP

CAMEROON DEMOCRATIC UNION -CDU-

The National President

Hon. TOMAINO NDAM NJOYA

……

SIGNATURE / STAMP