

Yaounde Declaration on Electoral Disinformation

At the conclusion of a two-day forum on electoral disinformation organised by [ADISI-Cameroun](#) and the [Collaboration on International ICT Policy for East and Southern Africa](#) (CIPESA), in Yaoundé, Cameroon on August 5- 6, 2024, we bloggers, journalists, activists, researchers, human rights defenders and civil society organisations, have forged a unified stance pertaining to electoral disinformation in the lead up to the 2025 elections. The following are our key observations and recommendations:

Observations

- *Information manipulation aggravates socio-political and security tensions and creates a climate of fear, terror and insecurity;*
- *Disinformation and hate speech is commonly perpetrated by political actors and diaspora communities;*
- *Tribalization of public debate, particularly online and in popular media has led to stigmatisation and propagation of hate speech through derogatory terminologies such as "blackleg", "mouton du nord", "babana", "sardinard", "tontinard", and "gadamayo BH";*
- *Political and ethnic hate speech and disinformation are threats to collective and individual freedoms;*

In light of the above and considering the severe impacts that disinformation and hate speech can have on the upcoming elections in Cameroon, particularly the presidential election, we propose the following recommendations:

To the Government:

- *Safeguard collective and individual freedoms during the electoral period, particularly citizens' right to credible information;*
- *Promote equitable access to political and electoral information for citizens;*
- *Integrate media and information literacy into educational programs;*
- *Ensure a healthy atmosphere during the upcoming presidential election.*

To Political Parties:

- *Develop a charter to combat hate speech and disinformation during electoral periods in Cameroon and commit to respecting it;*
- *Educate and sensitise candidates and their supporters on the electoral process.*

To the Media:

- *Ensure healthy and equitable political debates in the media;*
- *Prioritise panelists whose speeches are constructive and non-polemical;*
- *Create political and electoral content that helps citizens better receive the right information on the 2025 elections;*
- *Promote quality information.*

To Civil Society Organisations:

- *Organise digital media and information literacy campaigns to raise awareness ahead of elections;*

- *Develop a glossary of hate speech and disinformation ahead of the presidential election to identify and combat them better;*
- *Popularize information/fact-checking tools.*

Completed in Yaoundé on August 6, 2024

Signatories:

As an organisation:

- *Action for the Respect of Human Rights and Human Dignity (ARDHU)*
- *ADISI-Cameroun*
- *CIPESA*
- *Data Check*
- *EDUK-MEDIA*
- *Gender Data Journalist Network*
- *RAPEAJ (Réseau d'actions pour l'emploi et l'Autonomisation des jeunes).*
- *The SDGS Winners*
- *WafrikaTV*

In a personal capacity:

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