CAMEROON

CAMEROON’S criminal code penalizes “sexual relations with a person of the same sex” with conviction carrying a prison term of six months to five years and fines of over US$400. Since the mid-2000s, this provision has been used to harass and intimidate LGBT individuals and those who advocate on their behalf. Research shows that people arrested and detained under these laws are beaten, threatened with rape and subjected to anal examinations in custody, among other abuses.

Due to the political climate in which prominent community leaders condemn LGBT individuals as evil, those detained under the criminal laws are likely to be beaten by other prisoners, or potentially sexually abused. Prison authorities and guards offer no protection.¹ In March 2011, Jean-Claude Roger Mbede was sentenced to three years in prison for homosexuality for sending an affectionate text message to a friend.⁴ In July 2013, Eric Lembembe, a prominent gay human rights defender and journalist, was found tortured and killed in his home.⁵ So far, authorities in Cameroon have ignored calls from the United Nations and others to fully investigate Lembembe’s killing and bring the perpetrators to justice.

There is no legislation to protect employees against discrimination based on their real or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.

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