

Unrest in Cameroon's Anglophone regions sends thousands fleeing to Nigeria – UN agency

31 October 2017 – The United Nations refugee agency is scaling up efforts with partners to provide humanitarian assistance to thousands of Cameroonians who have fled violence in that country's Anglophone regions to south-eastern Nigeria.

UNHCR [the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees] is working with the Nigerian Government and other UN agencies on a contingency plan, readying humanitarian assistance for up to 40,000 people crossing into Nigeria, Babar Baloch, spokesperson for UNHCR, [told reporters](#) Tuesday at the regular press briefing in Geneva.

However, he pointed out that our fear is that 40,000 might actually be a conservative figure in a situation where the conflict might continue.

UNHCR and its Nigeria teams are currently evaluating the situation in various locations in south-eastern Nigeria and have registered some 2,000 people so far.

Additional 3,000 are awaiting registration, while more people might be stranded in forests in Cameroon when trying to cross the border.

Moreover, the UN agency has distributed relief items such as mattresses, blankets, mosquito nets, cooking utensils, hygiene kits, as well as 40 tons of food in Nigeria's Cross River state.

The current influx of Cameroonians seeking refuge in Nigeria poses additional challenges to the international community and a burden to an already stretched assistance, Mr. Baloch explained.

Nigeria and Cameroon are already grappling with one of the world's worst humanitarian crises, with 2.5 million people displaced by Boko Haram insurgency, according to UNHCR.

Cameroon's Anglophone regions have seen multiple strikes and demonstrations over the past year as tensions have mounted over what the country's English-speakers see as discrimination against them in favour of the majority French-speaking population.