The upper chamber of Cameroon’s bicameral Parliament is the 100-member Senate. Senators serve five-year terms; 70 are elected through indirect suffrage by regional councils, while the remaining 30 are appointed by the president. The 180 members of the National Assembly, the lower chamber, are directly elected in multimember constituencies to five-year terms.

The ruling CPDM won 63 of 70 contested seats in March 2018 Senate elections. The opposition Social Democratic Front (SDF), won the remaining 7 seats, all based in the Northwest Region. The 30 remaining senators, appointed by the president at his prerogative, all belong to the CPDM. The SDF alleged fraud and intimidation in the Northwest and Southwest Regions, and petitioned the Constitutional Council to cancel election results in the Southwest Region, but the council rejected the petition.

Long-delayed National Assembly elections were finally held in Cameroon in February 2020, together with municipal elections. The CRM refused to put up candidates, though the SDF participated, as did the National Union for Democracy and Progress (UNDP), which is allied with the CPDM. The CPDM retained its majority, winning 139 of the 167 seats contested. The Constitutional Council invalidated the results in 11 constituencies of the Anglophone Northwest and Southwest Regions, where boycotts and ongoing tensions resulted in low turnout; separatists claimed that 98 percent of eligible voters had boycotted the election. Reruns took place in March, and the incumbent CPDM won all 13 of the seats at stake.

On December 6, 2020, the first-ever regional elections took place despite calls for boycott by opposition parties, who rejected the government’s characterization that they would lead to greater regional autonomy in the country, and threats by separatist groups in the Anglophone regions to arrest would-be voters. In the indirect election, a 24,000-member electoral college composed of regional delegates and traditional chiefs chose 900 regional councilors in all 10 regions (90 for each region). Biya’s CPDM party won the majority.