



Immigration and
Refugee Board of Canada

Commission de l'immigration
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[Home](#) > [Research](#) > [Responses to Information Requests](#)

RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

[New Search](#) | [About RIRs](#) | [Help](#)

9 June 2005

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Cameroon: Government attitude toward and treatment of members of the Social Democratic Front (SDF) (June 2005)
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board, Ottawa

Recent information on the Cameroon government's attitude toward members of the Social Democratic Front (SDF) and its treatment of them was limited among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

Sources indicate that on 20 August 2004, John Khontem, an SDF leader in the North West Province, was beaten to death by the guards of Gah Gwanyin Doh III (*Country Reports 2004* 28 Feb. 2005, sec. 1.a; see also AI 25 May 2005) in Balikumbat (PANA 26 Aug. 2004). Gah Gwanyin is not only the traditional ruler and mayor of this village, but he is also a representative of the Cameroon People's Democratic Rally (Rassemblement démocratique du peuple camerounais, RDPC [the party in power]) in that region (AI 25 May 2005; PANA 26 Aug. 2004; *ibid.* 23 Aug. 2004). According to *Country Reports 2004*, John Khontem was returning from a meeting where he had accused Gah Gwanyin of committing pre-electoral fraud (28 Feb. 2005, sec. 1.a).

Country Reports 2004 also indicates that the SDF receives considerable support from natives of the North West and South West provinces in Cameroon, who have suffered disproportionately from human rights violations committed by the government and the security forces (*Country Reports 2004* 28 Feb. 2005, sec. 5).

In addition, on 6 July 2004, John Fru Ndi, an SDF leader (AI 25 May 2005), was injured when security forces used excessive force to end a rally in Yaounde, the country's capital (*Country Reports 2004* 28 Feb. 2005, sec. 2.b; see also AI 25 May 2005). In October 2004, security forces prevented a press conference from taking place at the SDF headquarters in Yaounde (*Country Reports 2004* 28 Feb. 2005, sec. 2.b; PANA 19 Oct. 2004). According to *Country Reports 2004*, "by occasionally censoring and significantly shortening proposed SDF programming" Cameroon Radio Television (CRTV) restricted the party's freedom of expression (28 Feb. 2005, sect. 2.a).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

Amnesty International (AI). 25 May 2005. "Cameroun." *Report 2005* .
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Panafrican News Agency (PANA). 19 October 2004. "Govt Security Disrupts SDF Press Conference in Yaounde." (Dialog)

_____. 26 August 2004. "Opposition Wants SDF Official's Assassins Brought to Book." (Dialog)

_____. 23 August 2004. "Cameroon's Opposition SDF Stages Protest in Bamenda." (Dialog).

Additional Sources Consulted

Publications: *Africa Confidential* , *Africa Research Bulletin* , *Jeune Afrique/L'Intelligent* , *Kissing's Record of World Events* ; Resource Centre country file, *West Africa* .

Internet sites, including: AllAfrica, Amnesty International, BBC Africa, European Country of Origin Information Network (ECOI), Human Rights Watch (HRW), International Crisis Group (ICG), International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), MISNA, ReliefWeb, United States Department of State.

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