



Immigration and
Refugee Board of Canada

Commission de l'immigration
et du statut de réfugié du Canada

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20 February 2004

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Cameroon: Whether a traditional marriage performed abroad between a Cameroonian woman and a foreigner vests him with the right to residence and Cameroonian citizenship (February 2004)
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board, Ottawa

The consular affairs official at the High Commission of Cameroon in Ottawa provided the following information during a telephone interview held on 17 February 2004.

Traditional marriages are not officially recognized in Cameroon. Even if it is celebrated before the appropriate Cameroonian authority, and regardless of where it is celebrated, a marriage between a Cameroonian woman and a foreigner does not vest the latter with Cameroonian citizenship.

To obtain Cameroonian citizenship, a man who lawfully marries a Cameroonian woman must apply to do so after renouncing his citizenship of origin. However, once he is married, he may reside in Cameroon as long as he complies with national laws.

In terms of the possibilities of acquiring citizenship through marriage, the only situation covered in Cameroonian law is that of a foreign woman who marries a citizen of Cameroon (United States Mar. 2001; Cameroon July 1968).

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 to refugee status or asylum.

References

Cameroon. July 1968. *Loi n° 1968-LF-3 du 11 juin 1968 portant code de la nationalité camerounaise*. <<http://www.unhcr.ch/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/research>> [Accessed 17 Feb. 2004]

High Commission of Cameroon, Ottawa. 17 February 2004. Telephone interview with a consular affairs official.

United States. March 2001. Office of Personnel Management. *Citizenship Laws of the World*. <<http://www.opm.gov/extra/investigate/IS-01.pdf>> [Accessed 17

Feb. 2004]

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