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## RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

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6 May 2005

### CMR43541.FE

Cameroon: The Cameroon Democratic Union (Union démocratique du Cameroun, UDC), including its structure, organization, membership card and the treatment of its members by government authorities (May 2005)  
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board, Ottawa

Information on the Cameroon Democratic Union (Union démocratique du Cameroun, UDC) was limited among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

Founded in 1991 (*Europa 2004* 2004, 996; *Mutations* 27 Sept. 2004; *Political Parties of the World* 2005, 105), the UDC is led by Amadou Ndam Njoya (ibid.; *Europa 2004* 2004, 996; EIU 28 Oct. 2004). The party holds 5 (ibid. 21 Feb. 2005; *Political Parties of the World* 2005, 106; *Elections Around the World* 10 Feb. 2005) of the 180 seats in Cameroon's National Assembly (ibid.), making it the third largest party (EIU 28 Oct. 2004), behind the Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (CPDM) (149 seats) and the Social Democratic Front (SDF) (22 seats) (*Elections Around the World* 10 Feb. 2005; EIU 21 Feb. 2005). The UDC won all five seats in Amadou Ndam Njoya's department (ibid. 28 Oct. 2004; *Political Parties of the World* 2005, 106), which led the Economist Intelligence Unit to label him a "regional player" on the Cameroon political scene (EIU 28 Oct. 2004).

In the 11 October 2004 legislative elections, Amadou Ndam Njaya obtained between 4.4 and 4.7 per cent of the votes (*Jeune Afrique/L'Intelligent* 17-23 Oct. 2004, 71; *Africa Research Bulletin* 31 Oct. 2004, 15948; *Elections Around the World* 10 Feb. 2005), which placed him third after Paul Biya (70.9 per cent) and John Fru Ndi (17.4 per cent) (*Africa Research Bulletin* 31 Oct. 2004, 1594; see also *Elections Around the World* 10 Feb. 2005). The UDC president ran in these elections as a candidate for the Coalition for National Reconciliation and Reconstruction (Coalition pour la réconciliation et la reconstruction nationale, CRRN) (*Mutations* 27 Sept. 2004), an alliance of 9 to 11 political opposition parties (*Africa Research Bulletin* 31 Oct. 2004, 15948; EIU 28 Oct. 2004).

The UDC president, who is also the spiritual and traditional leader of the Bamoum ethnic group (ibid.), as well as the deputy and mayor of Foumban (*Mutations* 27 Sept. 2004), is described as a "close ally" of Paul Biya, the current president of Cameroon (EIU 28 Oct. 2004).

No information on the UDC's structure, organization and membership card or on the specific treatment of its members could be found among the sources

consulted by the Research Directorate. However, one source indicated that in May 2004, Cameroon security forces prevented the CRRN from holding a public rally in the municipal stadium of Ebolowa, in the home region of Cameroon's president Paul Biya, when the UDC president was visiting as part of a nationwide tour (EIU 1 Aug. 2004). Moreover, *Country Reports 2004* indicated that security forces and government authorities were still arresting and imprisoning political opponents, among other people (28 Feb. 2005, Sec. 2.d).

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

*Africa Research Bulletin* [London]. 31 October 2004. Vol. 41, No. 10. "Cameroon: Biya Wins."

*Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2004* . 28 February 2005. United States Department of State. Washington, D.C.  
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Elections Around the World. 10 February 2005. "Elections in Cameroon."  
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*Jeune Afrique/L'Intelligent* [Paris]. 17-23 October 2004. No. 2284. François Soudan. "L'après-Biya a déjà commencé."

*Mutations* . 27 September 2004. "Adamou Ndam Njoya : le retour à l'éthique perdue." (Dialog)

*Political Parties of The World* . 2005. 6th Edition. Edited by Bogdan Szajkowski. London: John Harper Publishing.

#### Additional Sources Consulted

**Oral sources** : Attempts to contact the leaders of the UDC were unsuccessful.

**Publications** : *Africa Confidential* , *Africa Research Bulletin* , *Europa World Yearbook* , *Jeune Afrique/L'Intelligent* , Resource Centre country file, *West Africa* .

**Internet sites, including** : AllAfrica, Amnesty International, 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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