



Immigration and
Refugee Board of Canada

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

Canada

[Home](#) > [Research](#) > [Responses to Information Requests](#)

RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

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

19 May 2005

CMR43571.FE

Cameroon: The Southern Cameroon National Council (SCNC) and the Southern Cameroon Youth League (SCYL), including a description of their membership cards, a copy of the cards, their organizational structures, leaders and activities, as well as the treatment of their members by government authorities (2003-2005)
Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board, Ottawa

The Southern Cameroon National Council (SCNC) [translation] "claims the right of self-determination of the country's Anglophone population, which feels marginalized by the predominantly Francophone government" (*Le Monde* 17 July 2004). The group is not recognized by the authorities (AFP 25 Jan. 2005). According to the Economist Intelligence Unit, the SCNC is "a political pressure group . . . seeking to capitalise on [A]nglophone discontent and its membership is reported to be growing in spite of government action to dismantle the organisation" (5 Apr. 2005).

In Bamenda, in January 2004, the governor of Cameroon's English-speaking North-West Province vowed to "eliminate" the SCNC from his region by the end of the year (AFP 25 Jan. 2004).

According to several sources, the Cameroonian government held discussions with some SCNC leaders and promised money in support of setting up a new SCNC leadership (*The Post* 16 Apr. 2004; see also *The Herald* 30 Jan. 2004; *ibid.* 20 Feb. 2004).

The Cameroonian authorities raided the Bamenda SCNC office and sealed it (*The Post* 6 Jan. 2004). The raid was ordered as a result of internal rivalries and after Thomas Nwachan, the former SCNC Communication/Finance Officer, had formed another dissident faction (*ibid.*). Thomas Nwachan accused Nfor Ngala Nfor (SCNC National Vice Chairman) and Hitler Mbinglo (SCNC Northern zone leader) of betraying the struggle and SCNC Chief Ayamba Ete Otun of using the group's money to travel (*ibid.*). According to *The Post*, Nfor Ngala Nfor was the group's vice chairman in Bamenda on 23 April 2005 (23 Apr. 2005).

The Southern National Youth League (SCYL) is a wing of the SCNC that was created in 1997; several of its members have been arrested for acts of violence (*The Post* 25 Jan. 2005). The SCYL leader, Ebenezer Akwanga, escaped from Kondengui prison and went into exile in Nigeria (*ibid.* 23 Nov. 2004).

On 24 February 2005, SCNC Chairman Chief Ayamba, his Deputy, Nfor Ngala Nfor, and four others were arrested in Menji while on a tour of Southern

Cameroon (ibid. 11 Mar. 2005). The SCNC reacted by calling "on the United Nations to send a peacekeeping force to the English-speaking Provinces of Cameroon" (ibid.).

Moreover, the SCYL leader stated that 13 SCNC supporters and members were in detention on 22 November 2004 (ibid. 23 Nov. 2004).

In January 2005, *The Post* indicated that a court had adjourned the appeal of 15 SCNC supporters-jailed in 1999-to February 2005 "because the civil claimants were not in court" (25 Jan. 2005). Amnesty International denounced the fact that "Southern Cameroons National Council, SCNC, leaders arrested way back in 1999 are still languishing in detention without any hope of being tried" (*Mutations* 28 May 2004).

A 30 October 2004 Agence France Presse (AFP) article reported that five SCNC members were arrested during banned demonstrations on 1 October 2004, but were released on bail. Among those arrested were SCNC founding member Albert Mukong, Chief Etta Otun Ayamba and Nfor Ngala Nfor (AFP 30 Oct. 2004).

According to Albert Mukong, the International Committee of the Red Cross noted during a visit of the prisons that SCNC members [translation] "were being detained in very bad conditions" (ibid.).

Kondengui prison authorities refused to send Philip Tete, an SCNC activist, to the hospital when he fell critically ill and lapsed into a coma while serving his 10-year jail term (*The Post* 23 Nov. 2004).

The Post indicated that five SCNC members died at Kondengui prison, including Daniel Ntanen Ndifon (April 2003) and Martin Cheonumu (September 2004) (ibid. 25 Jan. 2005). However, another report from *The Post* stated that Martin Cheonumu, an SCNC activist, died at Kondengui prison in August 2004 (9 Aug. 2004).

AFP reported that 20 SCNC members were arrested on 21 and 22 September "as they prepared . . . to celebrate the anniversary of the independence of Southern Cameroon from Britain on 1 October 1961" (30 Sept. 2004). On 22 September 2004, the SCNC secretary "was arrested . . . on charges of 'clandestinely selling a special edition of the newspaper, The Southern Cameroon News', whose first page carried an article calling on its sympathizers not to vote during the 11 October election for the president" (*Mutations* 5 Oct. 2004). *The Post* reported that "some SCNC activists and some newspaper vendors who were detained on 22 September . . . have been released" (8 Oct. 2004).

On 2 March 2004, police surrounded a number of SCNC activists who converged at the residence of the SCNC national chairman, Chief Ayamaba Ette Otun, "for holding an illegal meeting" (*The Post* 5 Mar. 2004).

No information on the SCNC or SCYL membership cards could be found among the sources consulted by the Research Directorate.

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

Agence France-Presse (AFP). 30 October 2004. "Des sécessionnistes anglophones libérés sous caution." <http://www.cameroon-info.net/cmi_show_news.php?id=12152> [Accessed 17 May 2005]

_____. 30 September 2004. "Cameroon Police Arrest English-Speaking Activists." (Dialog)

_____. 25 January 2004. "Cameroon Governor Vows to 'Eliminate' Anglophone Secessionists." (Dialog)

The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU). 5 April 2005. "Cameroon Politics: Anglophones Welcome New Prime Minister." (Dialog)

The Herald [Yaoundé]. 20 February 2004. "Selection List: Cameroon Press 20 Feb 2004." (WNC/Dialog)

_____. 30 January 2004. "Selection List: Cameroon Press 30 Jan 2004." (WNC/Dialog)

Le Monde. 17 July 2004. "Repères." (Dialog)

Mutations [Yaoundé]. 5 October 2004. "Cameroon News Digest 05 Oct 2004." (WNC/Dialog)

_____. 28 May 2004. "Selection List: Cameroon Press 28 May 2004." (WNC/Dialog)

The Post [Yaoundé]. 23 April 2005. "Selection List: Cameroon Press 22 Apr 2005." (WNC/Dialog)

_____. 11 March 2005. Kini Nsom. "SCNC Wants Peace-Keeping Force." (Dialog)

_____. 25 January 2005. Kini Nsom. "Frail SCNC Detainees Stagger to Appeal Court." (Dialog)

_____. 23 November 2004. Kini Nsom. "SCNC Detainee Critically Ill at Kondengui." (Dialog)

_____. 8 October 2004. "Highlights: Cameroon News Digest 8 Oct 2004." (WNC/Dialog)

_____. 9 August 2004. "Selection List: Cameroon Press 9 Aug 2004." (WNC/Dialog)

_____. 16 April 2004. "Selection List: Cameroon Press 16 Apr 2004."

(WNC/Dialog)

_____. 5 March 2004. "Selection List: Cameroon Press 5 Mar 2004."
(WNC/Dialog)

_____. 6 January 2004. "Security Forces Seal Bamenda SCNC Secretariat."
<http://www.cameroon-info.net/cmi_show_news.php?id=13948> [Accessed 17
May 2005]

Additional Sources Consulted

Internet sites, including: *Afrique-Express*, Agence France-Presse,
AllAfrica.com, Amnesty International, *Cameroon-Info*, Cameroononline.org.

**The attached reproduction is a copy of an official work that is published by
the Government of Canada. The reproduction has not been produced in
affiliation with, or with the endorsement of the Government of Canada.**