

UNITED REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON

Date of Elections: May 28, 1978

Purpose of Elections

Elections were held for all the members of Parliament on the normal expiry of their term of office.

Characteristics of Parliament

The unicameral Parliament of Cameroon, the National Assembly, comprises 120 members elected for 5 years.

Electoral System

All citizens of Cameroon who have reached the age of 21 and have not been disqualified by law are entitled to vote. The name of each citizen who is permanently domiciled, or has lived for at least six months, in a particular constituency may be entered on the electoral list of that same constituency. Members of the armed forces are registered where based notwithstanding the residence requirement.

Disqualified from voting are convicted criminals, certain persons under personal restraint, persons under warrant for arrest, undischarged bankrupts, persons convicted of offences against the security of the State and the insane.

Electoral lists are revised annually. Voting is not compulsory.

All registered electors at least 23 years old by the date of the elections, who are able to read and write English or French, may be candidates for the National Assembly. Membership in the National Assembly is incompatible with the office of Minister, Vice-Minister, member of the Economic and Social Council, or senior officer of a national firm, unless a deputy is named to this last post as member of the board of directors of a public enterprise.

Lists of candidates must be submitted at least 15 days prior to election day, accompanied by a deposit of Francs CFA 50,000, reimbursable if the list obtains at least 25% of the valid votes cast.

For election purposes, the country as a whole constitutes one constituency. The amount of candidates comprising the fist of each legally-existing political party must equal the number of seats to be filled at the national level. Deputies are elected by simple majority, without preferential or limited voting or vote-splitting.

When at least two vacancies occur between general elections, by-elections are held within 12 months following the latter vacancy. No such elections

are held when vacancies arise less than one year before the end of the National Assembly's term.

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General Political Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

As in the past, the *Union nationale camerounaise* (UNC), the country's sole political party, alone presented 2,618 candidates for the National Assembly's 120 seats.

With respect to the 1978 elections, it was reported that the population actively participated in both the electoral campaign and the poll itself.

The UNC Charter, which outlines the party's internal and external policies, supports efforts towards the liberation of Africa and states that national economic and social development should be effected through encouraging private initiative while reserving for the State a determining and organizing role.

On polling day, the UNC obtained the massive support which it had requested; this was considered as proof of the people's approval of the policies which the Government follows within the framework of the UNC. Mr. Paul Biya remained Prime Minister.

Statistics

1. Results of the Elections

Number of registered electors.	3,592,757
Voters.	3,563,696(99.19%)
Blank or void ballot papers.	497
Votes in favour of the <i>Union nationale camerounaise</i>	3,563,199

2. Distribution of Deputies according to Sex

Men.	108
Women.	12
	120

3. Average Age of Deputies: 40 years