

Country: Cameroon

Years: 1961-1981

Leader: Ahmadou Babatoura Ahidjo

Ideology: Right

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS identifies Ahidjo's affiliation as UC until 1966, then UNC from 1966 onwards. Lansford (2015) clarifies that "a transition to unitary government began with the 1965–1966 merger of the regional political parties to form the Cameroon National Union (UNC) under the leadership of President Ahidjo". While Manzano (2017) codes Ahidjo's ideology as "right", its main source, the *Political Handbook of the World*, does not provide any corroborating information besides stating that "the Marxist–Leninist UPC was formed in 1948... fragmenting into pro-Soviet and Maoist factions in the 1960s. Sporadic UPC guerrilla activity presented no serious challenge to the Ahidjo regime" (2015). Bustin et al. (1963) quotes Ahidjo stating "to explain our ideology in twentieth-century terms, let us say that the theme of all our reflections... is... African socialism." Bustin et al. explains that this speech was intended to define the "official ideology" of the Union Camerounaise (UC). DeLancey (2019) tends to corroborate, reporting that "Ahidjo's policy of planned liberalism was formulated to encourage private investment, with government to play a strong role in guiding development." "Planned liberalism was a deliberate attempt at ideological neutrality. It sought to integrate the best elements of capitalism and socialism in respect to private initiative and national sovereignty" according to DeLancey, Mbuh, and DeLancey (2010). Mbaku and Takougang (2004) write "Ahidjo... felt that it was necessary to seek a development model or path that was different from the main paradigms that informed Western and Eastern development- socialism and capitalism... the country's [Cameroon's] political leadership sought a middle road, a development model akin to 'market socialism'. Under such a system, the government would maintain significant control and ownership of major industrial projects while encouraging the development of a strong private sector. Thus, according to Ahidjo, it was necessary to provide the new county with a resource allocation system that was essentially 'homegrown'." Mbaku and Takougang call planned liberalism "a variant of statism called planned liberalism". Bongma (2006) wrote "Ahidjo preferred African socialism grounded on the African heritage of community spirit... he did not even articulate clearly what he meant by socialism, other than to state broadly that this was the African way of doing things... Ahidjo argued that his system of planning did not prohibit private enterprise and that is was certainly not an excuse to nationalize industries and drive away private capital investments." Tesi (2017)

adds “Planned liberalism, in other words, was a convergence of the various strands of economic ideas, a dose of socialism, a dose of statism, and a dose of liberalism both orthodox and interventionist.” In V-Party (2020), 5 experts identify UNC’s ideology as “Center-right” (0.958) in 1970 and “Center-right” (0.826) in 1973 and 1978. In V-Party (2020), 5 experts identify “virtually no visible disagreement” in UNC in 1970, 1973, and 1978.

Years: 1982-2015

Leader: Paul Biya

Ideology: Right

Description: HoG does not identify ideology. CHISOLS does not identify head of government. CHISOLS identifies Biya’s party as UNC from 1982 to 1984, then RDPC from 1985 onwards. Perspective Monde identifies Biya’s party as UNC. While Manzano (2017) codes Biya’s ideology as right, Leonard (2006) suggests otherwise, writing “President Ahidjo and his successor pursued the policy of planned liberalism (renamed communal liberalism under Biya), which advocated significant government control over resource allocation”. DeLancey (2019) further reports that “Ahidjo’s policy of planned liberalism was formulated to encourage private investment, with government to play a strong role in guiding development.” “Planned liberalism was a deliberate attempt at ideological neutrality. It sought to integrate the best elements of capitalism and socialism in respect to private initiative and national sovereignty” according to DeLancey, Mbuh, and DeLancey (2010). These scholars also consider planned liberalism to be “a philosophy” which was later criticized as not effectively implemented by successive Cameroonian governments. Mbaku and Takougang (2004) write “Ahidjo... felt that it was necessary to seek a development model or path that was different from the main paradigms that informed Western and Eastern development- socialism and capitalism... the country’s [Cameroon’s] political leadership sought a middle road, a development model akin to ‘market socialism’. Under such a system, the government would maintain significant control and ownership of major industrial projects while encouraging the development of a strong private sector. Thus, according to Ahidjo, it was necessary to provide the new county with a resource allocation system that was essentially ‘homegrown’.” Mbaku and Takougang call planned liberalism “a variant of statism called planned liberalism”. Bongma (2006) wrote “Ahidjo preferred African socialism grounded on the African heritage of community spirit... he did not even articulate clearly what he meant by socialism, other than to state broadly that this was the African way of doing things... Ahidjo argued that his sstem of planning did not prohibit private enterprise and that is was certainly not an excuse to nationalize industries and drive away private capital investments.” Tesi (2017) adds “Planned liberalism, in other words, was a

convergence of the various strands of economic ideas, a dose of socialism, a dose of statism, and a dose of liberalism both orthodox and interventionist.” DeLancey, Mbuh, and DeLancey (2010) identify the RDPC as CPDM, writing “CPDM [i.e. RDPC] politics.” In the Global Party Survey 2019, 7 experts identify the average left-right (0-10) score of Cameroon People’s Democratic Movement (CPDM) as 5.0, the salience (0-10) of the economic dimension as 6.4, and the average divided-united (0-10) score of CPDM as 9.6. In V-Party (2020), 5 experts identify UNC’s ideology as “Center-right” (0.826) in 1978 and 1983, and 5 experts identify RDPC’s ideology as “Center-right” (0.885) in 2002 and “Center-right” (0.764) in 2007 and 2013. In V-Party (2020), 5 experts identify “virtually no visible disagreement” in UNC in 1978 and 1983, and 5 experts identify “some visible disagreement” in RDPC in 2002 and “negligible disagreement” in RDPC in 2007 and 2013.

References:

- Bongma, Elias K. *The Dialectics of Transformation in Africa*. Houndmills, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.
- Bustin, Edouard, Virginia Thompson, Victor T. Le Vine, Herbert J. Spiro, and Thomas Karis. *Five African States*. Edited by Gwendolen M. Carter. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1963.
- DeLancey, Mark D., Mbuh, Rebecca N., and DeLancey, Mark W., *Historical Dictionary of The Republic of Cameroon*. The Scarecrow Press, 2010.
- DeLancey, Mark W., Encyclopedia Britannica. 2019. *Cameroon: Moving Toward Independence*. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Cameroon/Moving-toward-independence>
- Lansford, Tom. *Political Handbook of the World*. Washington, D.C.: Sage Publishing, 2015.
- Leonard, Thomas M., ed. A-E. Vol. 1 of *Encyclopedia of the Developing World*. New York: Routledge, 2006.
- Manzano, Dulce. 2017. *Bringing Down the Educational Wall: Political Regimes, Ideology, and the Expansion of Education*. Cambridge.
- Mbaku, John Mukum, and Joseph Takougang, eds. *The Leadership Challenge in Africa*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2004.
- Norris, Pippa. 2020. Global Party Survey dataset. <https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataverse/GlobalPartySurvey>.
- Perspective Monde, University of Sherbrooke. "Cameroun, Dirigeants Politiques" [Cameroon, Political Leaders]. Perspective Monde. Accessed August 23, 2019. <http://perspective.usherbrooke.ca/bilan/servlet/BMGvt?codePays=CMR>

Tesi, Moses K. *Balancing Sovereignty and Development in International Affairs*.
Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2017.