



COI QUERY

Country of Origin

CAMEROON

Title

Arrest warrants and wanted notices

Reference period

January 2023 to 18 July 2025

Topic(s)

1. [Legal framework and issuance procedures](#)
2. [Formal features and characteristics, including appearance, format, content and security features](#)
3. [Use of fraudulent or unofficial arrest warrants or wanted notices](#)
4. [Incidents of arrest without a warrant](#)

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COI QUERY RESPONSE – Cameroon

Arrest warrants and wanted notices

1. Legal framework and issuance procedures

Information on the legal framework and issuance procedures of arrest warrants (*mandat d'arrêt*) and wanted notices (*avis de recherche*) was scarce among the sources consulted by EUAA within the time constraints of this query.

Part II of the Cameroon Law No 2005/007 of 27 July 2005 on the Criminal Procedure Code, titled 'Court Processes', and specifically Section 11 stipulate the following concerning the different types of documents which constitute 'court processes':

'(1) A court process shall be a written document by which a magistrate or a court orders either:

- the appearance or production of an individual before them; or
- the remand in custody of a suspect, a defendant, an accused, or
- a witness suspected of hindering the search for evidence; or
- the imprisonment of a convict; or
- the search of objects either used for or procured by the commission of an offence.

(2) The following shall constitute court processes:

summons, bench warrant, remand warrant, production, warrant, search warrant, warrant of arrest and imprisonment warrant.¹

Concerning the authorities responsible to issue documents listed as court processes, Section 12 states:

'(1) (a) The State Counsel may issue summonses, warrants of arrest, search warrants, or production warrants;

(b) In cases of offences committed *flagrante delicto*, he may issue remand warrants

(2) The Examining Magistrate may issue, a summons, a bench warrant, search warrant, a remand warrant, and a production warrant.

(3) The trial court may issue a summons, a bench warrant, a search warrant, a remand warrant, an imprisonment warrant, and a production warrant.²

With regards to arrest warrants, Section 18 of the Criminal Procedure Code notes:

¹ Cameroon, Loi N° 2005/007 du 27 juillet 2005 portant Code de Procédure Pénale, July 2025, [url](#)

² Cameroon, Loi N° 2005/007 du 27 juillet 2005 portant Code de Procédure Pénale, July 2025, [url](#)



(1) A warrant of arrest shall be an order given to an officer of the judicial police to arrest a defendant, an accused or a convict and bring him before one of the judicial authorities cited in section 12.

(2) If the defendant, the accused or a convict is at large, the Examining Magistrate or the trial court may issue a warrant for his arrest if the offence in question is punishable with loss of liberty, or in case of imprisonment sentence.

(3) If the defendant, or the accused or convict resides out of the national territory, and does not appear after having been summoned, the Examining Magistrate or the trial court may for purposes of extradition, issue a warrant for his arrest if the offence in question is punishable with loss of liberty of at least six (6) months, or if he is sentenced to the same term of imprisonment.¹³

Section 20 also states that:

(1) If the person against whom a warrant of arrest is issued cannot be found after careful search, a copy of the warrant shall be left at his last known place of abode or with the village or quarterhead.

(2) A report on the steps taken to execute the warrant shall be made in writing and forwarded to the person who issued the warrant.

(3) The judicial police officer charged with executing the warrant shall have his report signed and stamped by one of the administrative authorities mentioned in section 14 (6) and shall leave a copy thereof with him.¹⁴

Concerning the process of execution of arrest warrants, Sections 22 – 24 stipulate the following:

Section 22: The judicial police officer charged with the execution of a warrant of arrest may be accompanied by a sufficient number of law enforcement officers to prevent the person from escaping.

Section 23: The judicial police officer charged with the execution of a warrant of arrest may not enter any place of abode before 6 a.m. or after 6 p.m. for purpose of executing the warrant.

Section 24: The judicial police officer who executes a warrant of arrest shall be bound to take steps to issue a notice of discontinuance of the search for the person arrested as soon as such person has been handed over to the competent judicial authority.¹⁵

³ Cameroon, Loi N° 2005/007 du 27 juillet 2005 portant Code de Procédure Pénale, July 2025, [url](#)

⁴ Cameroon, Loi N° 2005/007 du 27 juillet 2005 portant Code de Procédure Pénale, July 2025, [url](#)

⁵ Cameroon, Loi N° 2005/007 du 27 juillet 2005 portant Code de Procédure Pénale, July 2025, [url](#)



2. Formal features and characteristics, including appearance, format, content, and security features

Information on the formal features and characteristics, including appearance, format and content of arrest warrants and wanted notices was scarce among the sources consulted by EUAA within the time constraints of this query.

Section 26 of the Criminal Procedure Code also states the following concerning the data included in warrants:

‘With the exception of a production warrant, all warrants or summonses shall state the full name, date and place of birth, affiliation, occupation and address of the person named therein and it shall be dated, stamped and signed by the magistrate issuing it or by the president of the trial court.’⁶

Official examples of arrest warrants and wanted notices could not be found among the sources consulted by the EUAA within the time constraints of this query. Unverified pictures of wanted notices issued in Cameroon were found displayed in the following articles of Actu Cameroun, a local newspaper source:

- Actu Cameroun, <https://actucameroun.com/2023/07/15/douala-la-gendarmerie-nationale-recherche-un-faux-declarant-en-douane-pour-escroquerie/>
- Actu Cameroun, <https://actucameroun.com/2023/11/16/vol-aggrave-evasion-la-police-judiciaire-lance-un-avis-de-recherches-contre-le-nomme-basga-marcel-aliou/>

As the issuance authority of the wanted notices, the above-mentioned articles mention the police force in a case of aggravated theft⁷, and the gendarmerie for a case of false customs fraud.⁸ In the latter case, the wanted noticed is titled as ‘Message Radio-Porté’.⁹

3. Use of fraudulent or unofficial arrest warrants or wanted notices

Information on fraudulent or unofficial arrest warrants or wanted notices could not be found among the sources consulted by EUAA within the time constraints of this query.

⁶ Cameroon, Loi N° 2005/007 du 27 juillet 2005 portant Code de Procédure Pénale, July 2025, [url](#)

⁷ Actu Cameroun, Vol aggravé, évasion: la police judiciaire lance un avis de recherches contre le nommé Basga Marcel Aliou, 16 November 2023, [url](#)

⁸ Actu Cameroun, Douala : La gendarmerie nationale recherche un faux déclarant en douane pour escroquerie, 15 July 2023, [url](#)

⁹ Actu Cameroun, Douala : La gendarmerie nationale recherche un faux déclarant en douane pour escroquerie, 15 July 2023, [url](#)



4. Incidents of arrest without a warrant

Information on the service, enforcement, and safeguards for arrest warrants and wanted notices was scarce among the sources consulted by EUAA within the time constraints of this query. However, the following information may be relevant.

The US Department of State (USDOS) indicated concerning arrest procedures, that the law required ‘police to obtain a warrant from a judge or prosecutor and to disclose their identity and state the reason for the arrest prior to apprehending a suspect, except when a person was caught in the act of committing a crime’, however, police often did not comply with these requirements.¹⁰

Similarly, the following incidents of alleged arrests without a prior arrest warrant were found:

- According to Human Rights Watch, in January 2025 a man was arrested on the charges of drugs dealing without an arrest warrant in the city of N’Gaoundéré, Adamawa region, who later died in police custody.¹¹
- HRW reported on the arrest of a human rights lawyer in Douala by gendarmerie officers in November 2024, after he questioned their attempt to arrest his client without allegedly presenting an arrest warrant.¹²
- Cameroun Actuel, a local media source noted that in May 2024, the gendarmerie arrested a comedian, following a complaint from the president of the Cameroon International Film Festival, allegedly without a prior arrest warrant, for comments he made on online platforms about a Nigerian actor, who was visiting Cameroon.¹³
- According to sources, a human rights lawyer faced violence by police officers, who tried to arrest his client for allegedly being involved in an accident without showing an arrest warrant.¹⁴
- Sources also reported that in August 2022 a human rights defender was arrested and detained in Bamenda, Northwest region, without an arrest warrant,¹⁵ ‘about a video he made on 9 July 2022 denouncing a Cameroonian military chief known as “Moja Moja”, for reportedly torturing people’.¹⁶ According to Amnesty International (AI) he was

¹⁰ USDOS, 2023 Country Report on Human Rights Practices: Cameroon, 23 April 2024, [url](#)

¹¹ HRW, Cameroon: Cries of Torture Precede Death in Custody, 27 January 2025, [url](#)

¹² HRW, Prominent Human Rights Lawyer Beaten in Cameroon, 2 December 2024, [url](#)

¹³ Cameroun Actuel, Des gendarmes sans mandat d’arrêt prennent d’assaut la résidence de CY International, 6 May 2024, [url](#)

¹⁴ CIVICUS, Opposition coalitions, irreverent language against institutions and discussing the President’s health are banned; Long list of arbitrary arrests of activists and journalists, 31 October 2024, [url](#); HRW, Police Assault Prominent Rights Lawyer in Cameroon, 22 December 2023, [url](#)

¹⁵ AI, With or against us: People of the North-West region of Cameroon caught between the army, armed separatists and militias, July 2023, [url](#), p. 45; Frontline Defenders, Arbitrary arrest and continued detention of human rights defender Abdul Karim Ali, 23 February 2023, [url](#)

¹⁶ AI, With or against us: People of the North-West region of Cameroon caught between the army, armed separatists and militias, July 2023, [url](#), p. 45



‘arbitrarily detained’ since his arrest and he was sentenced in life imprisonment by a military court in Yaoundé in April 2025.¹⁷

¹⁷ AI, Life sentence handed to peace activist an affront to justice, 15 May 2025, [url](#)



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