



International Boundary Study

No. 110 – May 14, 1971

Cameroon – Republic of the Congo Boundary

(Country Codes: CM-CF)

**The Geographer
Office of the Geographer
Bureau of Intelligence and Research**

INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY STUDY

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CAMEROON – REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO (Brazzaville) BOUNDARY

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
I. Boundary Brief.....	2
II. Historical Background.....	2
III. Alignment	3

APPENDIX

I. Documents.....	5
II. Maps	5

CAMEROON – REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO (Brazzaville) BOUNDARY

I. BOUNDARY BRIEF

Cameroon and Congo (Brazzaville) have a common boundary of about 325 miles. It follows a drainage divide for approximately 21 miles, a parallel of latitude for 85 miles, and rivers for 219 miles. Tripoints with both Gabon and the Central African Republic are situated on the thalwegs of rivers. The Gabon tripoint is located in the Ayina at 2° 10' 20" N., and the Central African Republic tripoint is located in the Sangha at about 2° 13' 20" N.

II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Between 1875 and 1882, Pierre Savorgnan de Brazza, a French naval officer, in a series of expeditions from Gabon explored much of present-day Congo (Brazzaville) and made treaties with local chiefs. A French law of November 30, 1882, ratified the treaties and provided for a government in the French Congo.

A decree of December 11, 1888, united French Congo and Gabon into a single administrative entity which lasted for 15 years. Between 1891 and 1903, the entire entity was officially known as the French Congo. On January 15, 1910, French Equatorial Africa was organized as a federation of the three colonies of Gabon, Middle Congo (formerly known as French Congo), and Ubangi–Shari–Chad. In 1914 Chad was detached from the colony of Ubangi–Shari and became a separate territory. Six years later Chad was made a colony within the federation of French Equatorial Africa.

In the meantime Germany proclaimed a protectorate over Cameroon (Kamerun) in July 1884. On December 24th of the following year, a Franco–German protocol established a boundary between their respective territories inland from the Bight of Biafra along the Campo river to the 10th meridian, and thence from this point, the parallel of latitude to the 15th meridian.

On February 4, 1894, a second Franco–German protocol delimited a boundary between French Congo and Cameroon starting from where the boundary of 1885 ended on the 15th meridian and continuing eastward and then northward to Lake Chad. A convention of March 15, 1894, confirmed the preceding protocol of February 4th. The convention delimited the boundary in the general sector of the present Cameroon–Congo (Brazzaville) boundary east of the 15th meridian as follows:

Article 1. The boundary between the Colony of the French Congo and the Colony of Kamerun shall follow, beginning with the intersection of the parallel forming the boundary with the meridian 12° 40' Paris (15° Greenwich), the aforesaid meridian as far as the Ngoko River, the Ngoko until it reaches the parallel 2; from there, extending eastward, it shall follow that parallel up to the Sangha River. Thence, extending northward, it shall follow the Sangha River for a distance of

30 kilometers; from the point thus fixed on the right bank of the Sangha, it shall continue in a straight line ending, on the Bania parallel [Bania located at 4° 00' 10" N., 16° 02' 00" E.], 62 minutes west of Bania;....

A Franco–German convention of April 18, 1908, abrogated the convention of March 15, 1894, and redelimited the boundary between Cameroon and the French territories from Spanish Guinea (now Equatorial Guinea) to Lake Chad. The 1908 line affords the alignment of the present Cameroon–Congo (Brazzaville) boundary.

Immediately prior to World War I, a Franco–German convention of November 4, 1911, again redelimited the boundary between French Equatorial Africa and Cameroon except for the sector north of the confluence of the Logone and Chari. The Cameroon boundary with the Middle Congo was located considerably south of the present Cameroon–Congo (Brazzaville) line. Also, a corridor of land was ceded by France along both banks of the Sangha, giving Germany access to the Congo river. In the settlement following World War I, French territory ceded to Germany by the 1911 convention was restored to French Equatorial Africa.

The League of Nations on July 22, 1922, conferred Cameroonian mandates on France and the United Kingdom. The French mandate consisted of the major part of the former German possession with the remainder adjacent to Nigeria under British mandate administered as two entities known as the Northern Cameroons and Southern Cameroons.

The Cameroon mandates were made trusteeships by the United Nations on December 14, 1946. The following year France established the autonomous State of Cameroun. After termination of the U.N. trusteeship, the State of Cameroun was proclaimed independent on January 1, 1960, and it became the Republic of Cameroun on the following March 4th. The Southern Cameroons voted in a plebiscite on February 11, 1961, for union with the Republic of Cameroun which was accomplished the following October 1st. The newly unified state was named the Federal Republic of Cameroon.

Following World War II, the colony of Middle Congo was made an overseas territory of France and a member of the French Union. Middle Congo became the Republic of the Congo and an autonomous member of the French Community on November 28, 1958. The Republic of the Congo (Brazzaville) was proclaimed independent on August 15, 1960. On January 1, 1970, the Congo (Brazzaville) changed its long-form name to the People's Republic of the Congo.

III. ALIGNMENT

The Cameroon–Congo (Brazzaville) boundary is determined by the Franco–German Convention of April 9, 1908. It is delimited eastward from the Gabon tripoint located at the intersection of the parallel of 2° 10' 20" N. and the thalweg or median line^[1] of the Ayina.

Parallel 2° 10' 20" N., from the Aina [Ayina] to Marker No. 4 on the road from Ndongo (Dongo) to Eta (Long) through the Djua (Jua) valley.

The watershed [water parting or drainage divide] between the Djua River and the Masimbo (Masimlo) River, from Marker No. 4 to the confluence of these two streams (Marker No. 2).

It is understood that, even though, between these two points (Marker No. 4 and Marker No. 2), the watershed cuts across the German road from Ndongo to Eta through the Masimbo valley, the boundary shall run at an equal distance from the French road and the German road, as shown on the map annexed to this Protocol.

Then the boundary shall follow the course of the Djua River, from its confluence with the Masimbo to [the Dja and then follow the course of this river to its confluence with the Boumba, which two streams form the Ngoko] the Ngoko (Dacha) River^[2] and the course of the Ngoko River to the Sangha (Ssanga) River.

.....

The islands in the Aina River and the Ngoko River shall belong to France.

(b) the boundary shall follow the Sangha (Ssanga) River from the mouth of the Ngoko to [the Central African Republic tripoint located on the thalweg of the Sangha at about 2° 13' 20" N. and 16° 11' 30" E.]....^[3]

^[1] The Annex to the Convention of April 9, 1908, states as follows: "Article IV. Whenever the boundary is determined by the course of a river or stream, the thalweg shall serve as the boundary. If, however, the thalweg properly speaking cannot be determined, the median line of the stream shall be the boundary, just as at the points where there are rapids. Furthermore, in the vicinity of islands, the boundary shall run midway between the islands and the bank that does not belong to the Power to which the islands belong."

^[2] Previously the river was known as the Jua downstream as far as the Ngoko. At present the Jua is considered to merge with the Dja a short distance north of Mesok.

^[3] This paragraph is completed as follows: "that of the Nyoue (Njue) River. However, all the islands in the Sangha River south of a fixed point 5 kilometers north of the position shown for the village of Balbal [Babal] on the map annexed to the Protocol shall be French; all the islands north of that point as far as the mouth of the Nyoue River shall be German."

APPENDIX

I. Documents

1. Protocol relating to the German and French Possessions on the West African Coast. Signed at Berlin, December 24, 1885 [Ratifications exchanged at Berlin, July 28, 1886]. Edward Hertslet, The Map of Africa by Treaty, 3 vols., 3rd Edition (London: Harrison and Sons, 1909). Vol. 2, pp. 653–4.
2. Protocol between the French and German Delegates for the Settlement of the Questions pending between the two countries in the Region comprised between the colonies of the Cameroons and French Congo; and to fix the Line of Demarcation of their Respective spheres of Influence in the Region of Lake Tchad. Berlin, February 4, 1894. Ibid, Vol. 2, pp. 657–60 (French).
3. Convention between the French Republic and Germany for the Delimitation of the Colony of the French Congo and the Colony of Kamerun and the French and German Spheres of Influence in the Lake Chad Region. Signed at Berlin on March 15, 1894 [Ratifications exchanged at Paris on August 10, 1894]. British and Foreign State Papers (BFSP), Vol. 86 (1893–4) pp. 974–8 (French).
4. Convention between France and Germany confirming the Protocol and its Annex of April 9, 1908, defining the Boundary between the Colonies of the French Congo and the Cameroons. Signed at Berlin, April 18, 1908 [Ratifications exchanged at Berlin, July 28, 1908]. BFSP, Vol. 101 (1907–8), pp. 1003–11 (French).
5. Convention between France and Germany relating to their Possessions in Equatorial Africa. Signed at Berlin, November 4, 1911 [Ratifications exchanged at Paris, March 12, 1912]. BFSP, Vol. 104 (1911), pp. 956–64 (French).

II. MAPS

Institut Geographique National (Paris) , Centre d'Afrique Equatoriale de Brazzaville; scale 1:200,000; 1960-70; sheets (Gabon tripoint to Central African Republic tripoint): NA-33-XIV (Mintom), NA-33-XV (Souanke), NA-33-XVI (Moloundou), NA-33-X (Liouesso), NA-33-XI (Ouesso), and NA-33-XVII (Bayanga).

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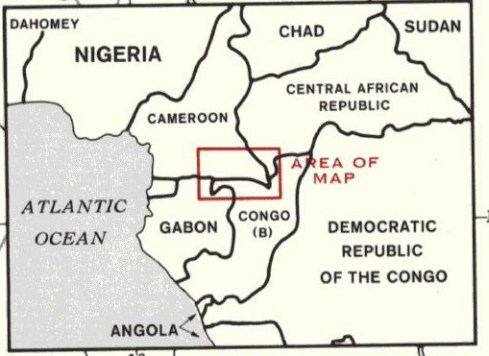
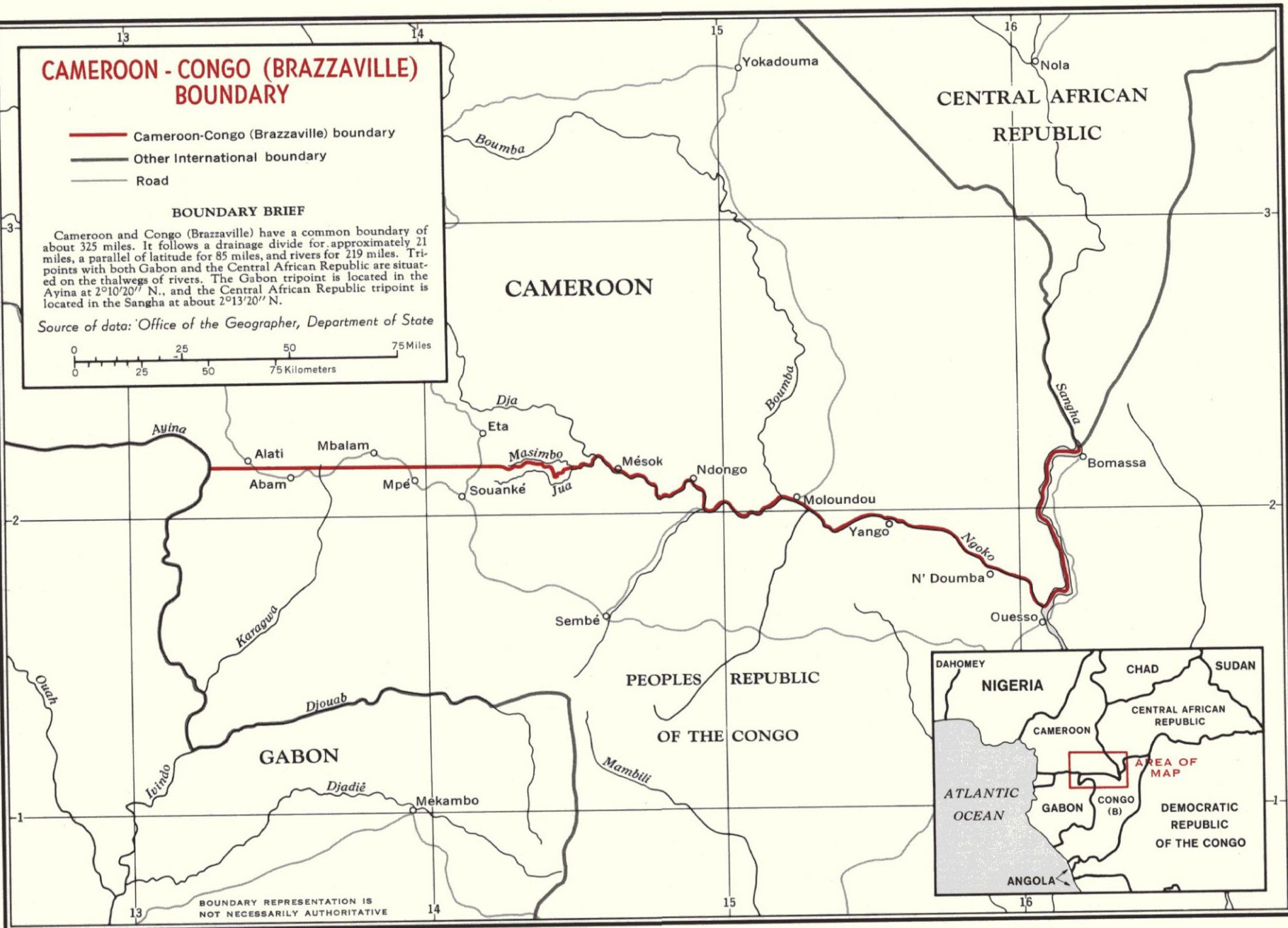
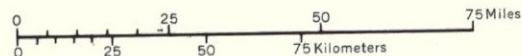
CAMEROON - CONGO (BRAZZAVILLE) BOUNDARY

- Cameroon-Congo (Brazzaville) boundary
- Other International boundary
- Road

BOUNDARY BRIEF

Cameroon and Congo (Brazzaville) have a common boundary of about 325 miles. It follows a drainage divide for approximately 21 miles, a parallel of latitude for 85 miles, and rivers for 219 miles. Tripoints with both Gabon and the Central African Republic are situated on the thalwegs of rivers. The Gabon tripoint is located in the Ayina at $2^{\circ}10'20''$ N., and the Central African Republic tripoint is located in the Sangha at about $2^{\circ}13'20''$ N.

Source of data: 'Office of the Geographer, Department of State



BOUNDARY REPRESENTATION IS NOT NECESSARILY AUTHORITY