



President of the Republic of Cameroon

H.E.M. PAUL BIYA

**SPEECHES,
DECLARATIONS
AND MESSAGES.**

Volume 13/2023



President of the Republic of Cameroun

H.E.M. PAUL BIYA

SPEECHS, DECLARATIONS, AND MESSAGES



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SPEECH BY THE HEAD OF STATE

IN RESPONSE TO NEW YEAR WISHES FROM THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS

Yaounde, 6 January 2023



Members of Diplomatic Corps

The Dean of the Diplomatic Corps,

First and foremost, I would like to thank you for your kind words addressed to me and to my country.

I am also pleased to see you again, two years after our last meeting, due, as you are aware, to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Distinguished Members of the Diplomatic Corps,

The year 2022, which has just ended, was marked mainly by the lingering adverse effects of this pandemic and the outbreak of an armed conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

These two major events continue to have a far-reaching impact on the stability of our economies, particularly those of developing countries, and tend to exacerbate global trade dysfunctions.

I would like to reiterate here that Cameroon remains committed to the peaceful resolution of conflicts through dialogue and negotiation.

Distinguished Members of the Diplomatic Corps,

Over the past year, the world continued to face other equally disquieting challenges, notably terrorism and violent extremism, migration issues and climate change, to name but a few.

Hence, as part of the quest for solutions to some of these challenges confronting African countries, I appealed at the recently held United States-Africa Leaders Summit, for the establishment of more coherent financing mechanisms tailored to the needs of the African continent.

I still believe that the African continent will be equipped to finance its development if a veritable African capital market is set up.

I am also pleased that the recent United Nations Climate Change Conference, COP27, that took place in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, underscored the importance of providing substantial funding support to the adaptation efforts of developing countries.

It now behoves developed countries to honour their commitments to establish a USD 100 billion fund for vulnerable countries to make up for the losses and damage they endure as a result of climate change.

The persistent inequalities in global trade should be of concern to the international community. The successive crises that States are facing have underscored the interdependence of economies and the need for solidarity among nations.

The operationalization of the Continental Free Trade Area is a major stride towards strengthening inter-African trade. In the long term, it could help grow Africa's share of global trade by substantially swelling its volume of trade with foreign partners.

Cameroon is proud to feature among the seven pioneer countries on the continent that are experimenting the export of specific products under mechanisms provided for in the Agreement establishing the Continental Free Trade Area.

Distinguished Members of the Diplomatic Corps,

As I mentioned earlier on, there are multiple lingering security crises worldwide. Unfortunately, Africa remains the theatre of many armed conflicts.

Such conflicts, regardless of form or justification, truly impede development and affect innocent people.

Of course, it is incumbent upon every State to take the necessary and useful measures to maintain peace within its borders or with its neighbours.

However, I wish to appeal to the international community to pay greater attention to the crises and conflicts occurring on the African continent.

The Dean of the Diplomatic Corps,

Distinguished Members of the Diplomatic Corps,

At this juncture, I would like to request you to convey to the High Authorities you represent, my best wishes for a prosperous New Year.

I also extend to you and your respective families, my sincere swishes for good health and success in 2023.

Long live international cooperation!

Long live international solidarity!

Thank you for your attention.

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HEAD OF STATE'S MESSAGE

57TH EDITION OF THE YOUTH DAY

Yaounde, 10th February 2023



My Dear Young Compatriots,

As I speak to you, I fathom your legitimate concerns in a global context marked by a series of crises affecting virtually all sectors of activity and every State.

In this regard, I pointed out in my recent message to the Nation that such exogenous shocks as well as lingering internal threats are disrupting the pace of implementation of some of our public policies.

It is clear that such a particularly challenging context has relatively slowed down the desired pace of our development, a situation which we all deplore. However, I can assure you that I have never lost sight of the goals we set together, those of building a strong Nation, a prosperous economy and a country that is proud, free and united in its diversity.

It is a bounden duty, a duty to which I will continue to devote all my energy to ensure that each of you has the opportunity to develop your full potential and meet your aspirations.

In recent years, we made laudable efforts and mobilized substantial financial resources to address the many security, health, humanitarian, economic and financial challenges facing us.

We will resolutely continue on the same path. Such is my pledge.

My Dear Young Compatriots,

Faced with the multiple crises characterizing the current context and the ensuing challenges, it is normal that, just like youth worldwide, you may feel somewhat confused. It is normal that you may be tempted to yield to doubt and fear about the future.

Just like youth worldwide, you may feel somewhat confused. It is normal that you may be tempted to yield to doubt and fear about the future.

You should not. Most of all, do not give up. Rather, utilize your intelligence, your wisdom, your resolve, your skills and talents to rise to the current and future challenges.

In this regard, as I told you before, education is inevitable. How useful would your talent be if you are not organized? How useful would your intelligence be if you get discouraged by the first difficulty?

You should therefore continue getting educated. You should also continue nurturing the love for discipline and hard work, while allowing yourself to be guided by the virtues of creativity and audacity.

For my part, I will continue making the requisite efforts to create, together with the Government and other social partners, an environment conducive to your education as well as your professional integration and development of your full potential.

To that end, I will, as in the past, prioritize the development of our educational system, with further emphasis on professionalization.

As you can notice, our school and university map has continued to expand, with the setting up of new primary and secondary schools, and universities.

Beside the traditional educational system, the Government has set up vocational training centres of excellence in several localities in our country and will continue to establish them nationwide. and will continue to establish them nationwide.

An extensive programme to upgrade Rural Artisan and Home Economics Centres to vocational training centres has been launched, with the operationalization of the Nkongsamba Centre.

These efforts are all geared towards providing you with the best possible training to make you competitive and capable not only of seizing the job opportunities available locally and internationally, but also of becoming veritable self-employed entrepreneurs.

My Dear Young Compatriots,

In a bid to foster your integration into the job market, the State is taking action to promote the requisite entrepreneurial culture for youth empowerment. That is why I prescribed the Special Three-Year Youth Plan in 2016.

This plan has already enabled the financing of over 11 thousand youth projects and generated close to 35 thousand direct jobs, for an overall cost of approximately 20 billion CFA francs.

To boost this plan, I have instructed the Government to fast-track the creation of a Guarantee Fund for Young Entrepreneurs,

with a special window for financing projects promoted by youth of the Cameroonian Diaspora.

In my recent message to the Nation, I announced the start or continuation of numerous projects in various sectors, notably infrastructure, energy and mining. These are employment niches that I am inviting you to take advantage of. am inviting you to take advantage of.

We will resolutely pursue our efforts to revitalize and diversify our economy, which will certainly create new job opportunities for our youth.

I must, however, recall that neither the State nor existing private sector enterprises alone can employ all the young people graduating from the traditional educational system each year.

That is why, once again, I am urging you to embrace self-employment by taking advantage of the opportunities available in areas such as agriculture, handicrafts, and digital economy.

This is definitely one of the most effective ways of reducing youth unemployment.

My Dear Young Compatriots,

Despite the challenging context, the Government is doing its utmost to create conditions conducive to better socio-professional integration of our youth.

We certainly need to step up our efforts to get a large number of young people into the workforce. We are committed to achieving that goal. It will be achieved.

Therefore, I urge you not to yield to despair, which drives some of you to the perilous path of illegal immigration, or the illusion of easy solutions that only lead to a dead end.

I also urge you to shun deviant behaviours, which are becoming rife in our society.

Regrettably, such is the case in schools where incivility, substance abuse, assault and many other excesses are increasingly becoming commonplace.

Such behaviours should be prohibited as they do not serve your best interests.

You should also resist the temptation to seek refuge in the virtual world through misuse of the Internet and digital platforms, with the risk of losing touch with reality.

Aware of these threats, I have instructed the Government to draw up a charter to ensure the protection of children on the Internet in our country.

My Dear Young Compatriots,

I encourage you, however, to keep up with the times and use digital and technological advancements to improve your living conditions and those of your fellow citizens in the real world.

I urge you not to lose hope in your country and to have confidence in the future. Challenges will always be a part of human life, but they must be faced with courage and determination.

I will always stand by you in this salutary battle, that of meeting your aspirations for progress and modernity. We cannot afford to lose this battle. I know I can count on you. You can count on me.

I wish you all a happy youth day.



SPEECH BY THE HEAD OF STATE

14TH EDITION OF THE CENTRAL AFRICAN ECONOMIC AND MONETARY COMMUNITY (CEMAC) DAY

**SPEECH BY H.E. PAUL BIYA, PRESIDENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON**

**ACTING PRESIDENT OF THE CONFERENCE OF
HEADS OF STATE OF CEMAC.**

Read by Mr AYANG Luc
President of the Economic and Social Council

Yaounde, 16th March 2023



CFA Franc Reform : CEMAC Counitnues Deep Reflection

***Your Excellencies, Heads of State of CEMAC,
Peoples of CEMAC,***

On 16 March 2023, we are celebrating the 14th edition of the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC) Day.

This important event reflects our constant quest for a community ideal based on living together. It provides the CEMAC member states with an opportunity to pause and take stock, in order to consider the prospects for their joint actions to promote inclusive economic and social development.

Internationally, the world economy continues to face numerous shocks. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the geopolitical crisis between Russia and Ukraine has led to strong pressure on energy and food prices.

As you know, our sub-region has not been spared. These shocks have jeopardised the economic recovery efforts undertaken by our States. However, they are resolutely pursuing the various economic and financial reforms they have adopted, with a focus on inflation control and economic diversification.

Our growth rate is estimated at 1.7% in 2021 and 2.9% in 2022. Fiscal consolidation efforts are producing appreciable results. Our budget and external current account balances are gradually improving.

The lessons we have learned from the many economic and financial constraints facing our sub-region in recent years invite us to take up the challenge of structurally transforming our economies. This urgent and important step could enable us to substantially reduce our trade deficit and our exposure to external

shocks. The import-substitution policy is a good option for option for achieving these objectives.

With a view to the emergence of our Community, having human resources in good health, well trained in various disciplines and adapted to the needs of the employment market and the development of our sub-region, is also a major challenge. Indeed, human capital is today a keystone of the development we want for our peoples.

Hence the choice of theme for this year's conference: "Enhancing human capital for an emerging CEMAC".

In view of the many socio-economic threats facing our countries, this theme is a challenge to all development players. The emergence of our sub-region will depend on our collective mobilisation.

***Distinguished Heads of State of CEMAC,
Peoples of CEMAC,***

Human capital is understood as all the knowledge, qualifications, skills and individual characteristics that facilitate the creation of personal, social and economic well-being. It is an intangible asset essential to progress and a key factor in productivity, innovation and employability.

Our Community must continue its efforts to develop its human capital. It is worth noting that five of the twelve specialised institutions and executive agencies of CEMAC are involved in human resources training.

Similarly, we can note the implementation of the programme to build the CEMAC Higher Education, Research and Vocational

Training Zone (Espace CEMAC de l'Enseignement Supérieur, de la Recherche et de la Formation Professionnelle).

The aim is to modernise and adapt higher education in the CEMAC zone to the new demands of the highly competitive and dynamic job market.

It should also be noted that human capital is an anchor point for the 2nd phase (2021-2025) of our Economic and Financial Reform Programme.

Economic and Financial Reform Programme (PREFCEMAC), which is currently being implemented.

As you will surely have noticed, our Community has undertaken a number of actions to promote the development of human capital.

Our universities and higher education institutions must seek to occupy the top ranks in the various international rankings if we are to win the battle for excellence in education.

***Distinguished Heads of State of CEMAC,
Ladies and Gentlemen,***

the development of human capital must be an opportunity for our countries. It is about rewriting the social contract and releasing the vast growth potential of our sub-region.

With this in mind, we must place particular emphasis on everything that contributes to improving the living environment of our populations. The best training opportunities tailored to employment needs must be accessible to all.

To this end, I urge the governments of the Member States to take ownership of this issue and to reflect on it in greater depth, in order to take appropriate action to promote the development of human capital.

This is the key to inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

I cannot conclude without thanking our technical and financial partners for their constant concern for the benefit of our Community in its quest for emergence.

***Excellencies, Heads of State of CEMAC,
Peoples of CEMAC,***

I am convinced that beyond the commemorative dimension, this edition of the CEMAC Day will serve as a platform for reflection on the sustainable development challenges the Central African sub-region is facing.

It is on this hopeful note that I wish every success to the activities marking the celebration of the 14th edition of the CEMAC Day.

Long live the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa!

Long live the sub-regional integration!



SPEECH BY THE HEAD OF STATE

15TH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF CEMAC HEADS OF STATE

**OPENING SPEECH BY H.E. PAUL BIYA,
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON,
HEAD OF STATE**

**CURRENT CHAIR OF THE CONFERENCE
OF CEMAC HEADS OF STATE**

Yaounde, 17 March 2023



Roadmap for Regional Integration within the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC)

***Distinguished Heads of State of CEMAC,
Dear Brothers,
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,***

I am very pleased to welcome you once again to Yaounde, for the Conference of Heads of State of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC). It is being held in-person for the first time since November 2019, because of the outbreak of the Coronavirus pandemic, as you are aware.

On behalf of the Cameroonian people and on my personal behalf, I wish you and the delegations accompanying you, a warm welcome to Cameroon and a pleasant stay.

Your presence at this meeting bears testimony to our common desire for a strengthening of the bonds of solidarity, fraternity and cooperation existing between the States and peoples of CEMAC. It is my wish that our proceedings be crowned with the success that has always characterized our meetings.

***Distinguished Heads of State,
Dear Brothers,***

The challenges along our path to the integration of our States are multiple and varied. The world is changing, and CEMAC cannot afford to stay on the sidelines of this dynamic.

As you are aware, the world is now a global village. Distance is no longer an obstacle, interconnections are intertwining and we have all become interdependent.

This is evidenced by the war in Ukraine, with the ensuing hike in food and energy prices, and the successive waves of COVID-19, with its adverse social and economic impacts worldwide.

The ongoing structural reforms under the CEMAC Economic and Financial Reform Programme (PREFCEMAC) are pertinent, and warranted by our awareness of the far-reaching changes taking place in the world and in our sub-region.

This conference affords us the opportunity to review, among other things, the status of implementation of this Programme which, as we know, is considered by experts as the right path to the consolidation of our sub-region's economic vitality. It will also enable us not only to address the impacts of the Russia-Ukraine war on our economies, but also to streamline the two Central African regional economic communities, just to mention these few points.

Indeed, our common resolve to coherently foster the economic and social development of our countries has highlighted the need to merge the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC) and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS).

The same holds true for the reform of some community institutions, namely the Development Bank of Central African States (BDEAC), or merging of the two subregional stock markets.

***Distinguished Heads of State,
Dear Brothers,***

The well-being of our brotherly peoples also hinges on a harmonious integration of our national economies through the implementation of our transformative and integrative projects.

In this regard, we will need to focus on the implementation of our second-generation Regional Economic Programme which is centred on a portfolio of twelve priority integrative projects that can fast-track CEMAC's physical and trade integration. We will also need to

accelerate the release of the CEMAC biometric passport. All these actions will foster better intermeshing of our States, increased movement of people and goods as well as improved performance of our economies.

However, all of this cannot be achieved without peace and security within our national and sub-regional borders.

Insecurity caused by internal and cross-border armed groups roaming our sub-region definitely features among the threats looming over the development of CEMAC. Their activities are all the more dangerous as one of their attacks cost the life of our late brother President Idriss Deby Itno. They have compelled our States to make huge sacrifices in terms of security spending.

Although we have made major strides here and there, we need to stay on the alert and not relent in our efforts. Such is the case, for instance, with the fight against the Boko Haram terrorist group.

We should stay true to our national and community commitments in order to restore peace and progress in our countries and our sub-region. To this end, solidarity should be the watchword.

***Distinguished Heads of State,
Dear Brothers,
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,***

While reiterating my wishes for a successful meeting, I declare open, the proceedings of the 15th Ordinary Session of the CEMAC Conference of Heads of State.

Long live the Central African Economic and Monetary Community.

Long live regional cooperation.

Thank you.



SPEECH BY THE HEAD OF STATE

15TH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE CEMAC CONFERENCE OF HEADS OF STATE

**CLOSING SPEECH BY H.E. PAUL BIYA,
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC
OF CAMEROON, HEAD OF STATE,**

**CURRENT CHAIR OF THE CEMAC
CONFERENCE OF HEADS OF STATE**

Yaounde, 17th March 2023



***Distinguished Heads of State of CEMAC,
Dear Brothers,
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,***

I am very pleased to once again take the floor before you this evening to close our proceedings of today.

My pleasure is all the more justified as the said proceedings have led to the adoption of resolutions which should produce positive effects that will be immediately felt by our people.

Throughout the proceedings, I did perceive our shared desire to prioritize the interests of the Community.

In this regard, we have made major strides towards improving the efficiency of our community institutions.

We have made headway regarding the measures to be taken to ensure the continuation of the CEMAC Economic and Financial Reforms Programme, the consolidation of our monetary union, strengthening of our structural policies and the improvement of the functioning of our community institutions.

In a nutshell, we assessed the ground covered and the efforts still to be made. The progress noted in the integration of our economies bodes well for the future.

There is reason to be confident in our Community's ability to rationalize the shared exploitation of our huge resources.

***Distinguished Heads of State of CEMAC,
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,***

Despite exogenous constraints, our action during Cameroon's tenure at the helm of our common organization remained focused on pursuing our integration objectives.

We have reached major milestones because community building is a long process. I remain optimistic about its progressive establishment.

At this juncture, I would like to extend my gratitude to all of you, Heads of State and peoples of CEMAC, for your support and confidence throughout my tenure.

I would also like to thank all our development partners for supporting us to achieve the goals we set ourselves within CEMAC.

I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the President of the CEMAC Commission, as well as the heads of all our community institutions, who spare no effort to ensure their smooth functioning. Lastly, I hail the vitality of all those who contributed directly or indirectly to the preparation and successful conduct of this Summit.

As I hand over the chairmanship of the Conference of CEMAC Heads of State to our Brother, President Faustin-Archange Touadéra, I would like to express our confidence in him and our willingness to work with him for the progress of our Community and in the interest of our brotherly peoples.

I am convinced that under his leadership, our Community will win more victories on the path to its integration and economic emergence.

While wishing all delegations a safe return to their respective countries, I declare closed, the 15th Ordinary Session of the Conference of CEMAC Heads of State.

Thank you for your attention.

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STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT PAUL BIYA

FIRST PLENARY SESSION OF THE
WORK 2ND RUSSIA-AFRICA SUMMIT

Saint Petersburg, 28th July 2023



President Paul Biya and Mr. President of the Russian Federation,

Mr President of the Russian Federation,

First of all, permit me to express the gratitude of the delegation accompanying me and my personal gratitude for the warm and fraternal welcome we have received in this beautiful city.

I would also like to express the gratitude of the African continent, and Cameroon in particular, for this summit, which will undoubtedly strengthen cooperation between Africa and the Russian Federation.

The Russian Federation's interest in Africa may come as a surprise to some people. But this interest has been there for a long time. As is widely known, Russia provided sincere and effective assistance to Africa during its struggle for independence in the 1960 s. We would like to reiterate our gratitude to this great country.

Today's Forum is a continuation of that cooperation, which has benefited Africa.

The world is currently facing many challenges, including drought and crises, not to mention COVID-19, which has wreaked havoc. There are also other problems such as runaway inflation.

To meet these many challenges, we seek the cooperation that the Russian Federation has always extended to us. Our discussions will enable us to find solutions to our problems.

Let me mention some of these problems. Africa, with more than a billion inhabitants, is under-represented in international organizations, especially in the UN. We are counting on Russia's support to rectify this situation.

We would also like to stress that our countries face enormous development challenges, which have been exacerbated by the crises. We hope that, as in the past, the Russian Federation will continue to assist us in obtaining the necessary resources for investment. We would like, for example, that the IMF be requested to reissue SDRs to increase financing for Third World economies, especially African economies. We will also discuss security and terrorism. We would like to thank Russia for the assistance it is giving to many countries in the fight against terrorism.

In short, Africa is facing all the challenges of our time and we believe that this meeting will enable us to move forward in the search for solutions.

I do not want to talk about all the challenges facing Africa. But I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Russian Federation for everything it has done to help Africa make economic and humanitarian progress.

Our students are doing well in Russian universities and academies.

We thank the Russian Federation for all this support and we hope that at the end of our deliberations, cooperation between the Russian Federation and Africa will continue to grow.

Thank you.

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STATEMENT BY H.E. PAUL BIYA,

78TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

General Debate (From 19th to 26th September 2023)

Theme: "Rebuilding trust and reigniting global solidarity: accelerating action on the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals towards peace, prosperity, progress and sustainability for all"

Delivered by the Minister of External Relations of the Republic of Cameroon



78th Ordinary Session of the United Nations General Assembly

***Mr President,
Heads of State and Gouvernement,
Heads of Delegation,
Distinguished Delegates,
Excelencie, Ladies ans Gentlement,***

I am honoured to represent the President of the Republic of Cameroon, H.E. Paul Biya, at the proceedings of the 78th Session of the United Nations General Assembly. He has directed me to deliver the following address on his behalf and I quote:

Permit me, first of all, to extend Cameroon's warm congratulations to Mr Dennis Francis on his election as President of this session. We believe that by virtue of his rich experience in multilateral diplomacy and his sterling personal qualities, our proceedings will be efficiently and successfully conducted.

Therefore, I wish to reassure him of my country's support in the discharge of his lofty duties.

I avail myself of this opportunity to also congratulate his predecessor, Ambassador CSABA KOROSI, on his active part in preparing several high-level meetings, whose review during the 78th session is about our future. Cameroon here and now extends its profound gratitude to him.

I am also pleased to once again extend my deep appreciation to the Secretary-General, Antonio GUTERRES, for the outcomes achieved thus far in discharging his lofty and delicate duties. reiterate Cameroon's full support for his efforts geared towards enabling our Organization to efficiently address today's multiple global challenges.

Lastly, from this rostrum, I would like to restate Cameroon's support for and solidarity with the respective Governments and peoples of the Kingdom of Morocco and the Republic of Libya following the natural disasters that recently hit them causing heavy loss of lives and property.

***Mr President President,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,***

The general theme of this session's debate is: "Rebuilding trust and reigniting global solidarity: accelerating action on the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals towards peace, prosperity, progress and sustainability for all". The relevance of the theme is selfevident.

This 78th session is being held against a backdrop of heightening tensions and geopolitical rivalry that are threatening peace and economic, social and cultural development in multiple countries in Africa, Asia, the Americas and Europe. Such is the case in Ukraine, the Sahel and Great Lakes regions and the Horn of Africa.

These situations are undermining efforts being made to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic, revive growth and development, and efficiently combat climate change.

Fortunately, the international community has mobilized to reach consensus on some major challenges. Such is the case for the Paris Climate Agreement, the major agreement on sustainable development programme which we jointly launched right here in 2015, alongside the Addis-Ababa Action Agenda on develop-

ment financing. Even more recently, we adopted the Ottawa Framework Agreement and the Agreement on Marine Biodiversity.

It is under the same impetus that Africa is gradually implementing its Agenda 2063 and the Agreement on the African Continental Free Trade Area to promote an integrated Africa, a peaceful Africa, a secure Africa, an Africa of good governance, an Africa of shared prosperity and an Africa as an influential global player and partner by 2063.

Despite all these efforts, the expected results are yet to be seen. What could explain such a situation?

Mr President,

Among other reasons, it should be acknowledged that often, there is no follow-through on promises made. I would mention for instance, insufficient mobilization of resources towards achieving the SDGs, or failure to reach the 0.7% target set for official development assistance despite promises made almost 50 years ago.

It must also be acknowledged that, in some cases, the resources mobilized have either been delayed or were disbursed sparingly due to certain conditionalities.

Furthermore, tepid political will has often been the issue, when not simply lacking or distorted by egoistic considerations, which sometimes take precedence over the general interest and active solidarity between peoples and nations.

Lastly, the tools, mechanisms, institutions and approaches put in place in the aftermath of World War II to promote peace, security and economic and social development are no longer as effective or relevant, given the diversity and complexity of new realities of the world.

Mr President, what is the way forward now?

First and foremost, we need a sense of pride, self-competition and a fresh political will, as well a renewed conscience, which emphasizes the primacy of the general interest, where Science is placed at the service of humanity to ensure the well-being of each and every one of us, in important areas such as peace, security, health, and economic, social and cultural development.

In this regard, our actions must truly be based on the UN Charter, its ideals, principles and objectives.

We must resolve conflicts through dialogue and consultation.

We must promote a pact for a renewed global financial architecture.

We must work relentlessly for the advent of veritable balanced global development, whereby all the regions of the world can aspire to prosperity and growth. This, in any case, is Africa's ambition, through Agenda 2063 and the establishment of a Continental Free Trade Area, whose outcomes are expected in areas such as research, science, technology, energy, infrastructure, communications and telecommunications, agriculture and food, debt, climate and development financing, in general.

Lastly, we must take collective action to reform the Security Council in order to ensure a permanent and fair representation of the countries of the South and, in particular, Africa.

Worth noting is the fact that Africa is not only underrepresented on the Security Council but is also the only continent without a permanent presence on this Organ, whereas two thirds of the UN's activities are devoted to that continent. Truth be told, this is an injustice that should be corrected.

Accordingly, we reaffirm our support for the Ezulwini consensus and the Sirte Declaration, by demanding two additional permanent and three additional non-permanent positions for Africa on the Security Council.

***Mr President,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,***

Cameroon for its part is determined to fulfil its commitments under the various circles of solidarity to which it belongs.

Cameroon was among the first countries to ratify the Paris Climate Agreement and, in conjunction with the other members of the Congo Forest Basin, is actively working to seek solutions to climate change. climate change.

Cameroon is also among the pioneers in the operationalization of the African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement, and has initiated a plan to implement the SDGs and Agenda 2063, through the adoption of a National Development Strategy, the NDS 2030, seeking to make Cameroon an emerging country by 2035.

It has also adopted all the reforms needed to promote sustainable economic and social development, good governance focused on decentralization, in order to allow all citizens to participate fully in the affairs of their country.

Security-wise, the battle against Boko Haram is ongoing actively, together with the member countries of the Joint Multinational Force of the Lake Chad Basin Commission. The outcome of these efforts are already tangible on the ground, although additional efforts are needed.

In the North-West and South-West Regions in particular, peace and stability are returning progressively, thanks to the diligent actions of the Government following the recommendations of the Major National Dialogue, despite sporadic cases of separatist-orchestrated violence or hostage-taking with demands for ransom.

Government's effective implementation of the Presidential Reconstruction and Development Plan, as well as the operationalization of the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) Centres, augur well for a return of sustainable peace and stability, and the revival of economic and development activities in the two Regions. These efforts will definitely not be futile.

I wish to avail myself of this opportunity to once again thank our bilateral and multilateral partners who continue to contribute towards improving the situation, through their support for the various plans adopted by Government. Their invaluable assistance in combating the financing of destabilizing activities in these two regions is also appreciated by Government, which continues

to appeal to those who have taken up arms to lay them down.

ing of destabilizing activities in these two regions is also appreciated by Government, which continues to appeal to those who have taken up arms to lay them down.

***Mr President,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,***

The world is changing dramatically. Therefore, it is up to us to adopt the appropriate decisions and guidelines to make it better, for the well-being of our populations. We can achieve this, as long as we are able to strengthen our solidarity to tackle our common challenges together.

In this era of digital and artificial intelligence, we have prodigious tools in our hands. If used wisely, they can enable us to achieve the desired outcomes in order to ensure the survival of humanity and secure a better future.

Thank you.

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**HEAD OF STATE'S END-OF-YEAR 2023 AND NEW
YEAR 2024 MESSAGE TO THE NATION**

Yaounde, 31th December 2023

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Fellow Cameroonians,

My Dear Compatriots,

Over the past year which is drawing to an end, our country has been faced with numerous challenge.

Some of them result from an increasingly difficult international context. Others are due to purely domestic issues, most of which are long-standing.

I would like to start by assuring you that in spite of this difficult situation, we continued to cope, together, like the united and close-knit Nation that we have always been, our eyes riveted on a single objective, the only one that matters, namely progress.

As in the past, the said international context weighed heavily on our internal situation.

The lingering war in Eastern Europe continued to disrupt the supply channels of the global consumer products market.

Foodstuff and energy resource prices thus continued to rise as the conditions for accessing external financing tightened.

The resurgence, last October, of the Israeli- Palestinian conflict worsened the rifts within the international community and is now monopolizing its attention.

As expected, such a situation adversely impacted our country. It led to a general price hike in consumer products and, consequently, the cost of living. It also resulted in various types of shortages, including a shortage of petroleum products.

My Dear Compatriots,

The difficulties that I have just mentioned in no way dampened my resolve to work for the well-being of our people, who, without any doubt, massively trusted and continue to trust me.

Despite the unfavourable context, the Government, under my authority, continued its action with greater determination.

The laudable efforts made following the Covid-19 pandemic to ensure economic recovery yielded appreciable outcomes. The resilience of our economy was confirmed.

Proof of this, is our growth rate which continued to progress and was estimated at 3.9% in 2023, thanks notably to the performance of the non-oil sector.

The consumption support measures implemented by Government helped to contain and stabilize inflation at about 6.7%.

The implementation of various projects was continued or launched to meet the aspirations of the people and improve their wellbeing.

I would like to dwell for a moment on the most sensitive sectors.

The Project to Supply Drinking Water to the City of Yaounde and its Environs from the River Sanaga is virtually completed. Its imminent commissioning will help to substantially reduce the drinking water deficit in the city of Yaounde.

Studies on the Project to Supply Drinking Water to the City of Douala and its Environs are well advanced. In the long term, the city will be supplied an additional 400 thousand cubic metres of water daily.

Moreover, the Government has embarked on upgrading drinking water production stations in several secondary towns, namely Dschang, Yabassi, Garoua-Boulai, etc.

The requisite efforts will continue to be deployed to rehabilitate and extend the distribution networks of this precious resource in our towns and villages to make it more accessible to households.

Major strides were also made in the electricity sector to reduce our country's energy deficit.

About 44 thousand solar panels have been installed in the three northern regions, covering 40% of electricity needs in the said regions.

The 420-megawatt Nachtigal Dam will be commissioned in the coming days.

The Lom Pangar Dam-toe plant will also be operational in 2024. It will help to increase energy supply in the town of Bertoua and its environs.

Several other hydropower facility projects are also planned or being launched. These include the Kikot, Minkouma, Grand Eweng and Bini à Warak dams.

In the long term, the installed capacity of all these facilities will secure our country's electric energy self-sufficiency. Additionally, it will make us reach the enviable status of electricity-exporting country.

My Dear Compatriots,

I am aware of the extent to which the frequent water and electricity cuts are impacting your daily life and disrupting your activities.

I can assure you that the Government is sparing no effort to improve the situation in these core sectors.

I have instructed my Office to ensure celerity in administrative procedures and in sourcing for related financing by the relevant ministries.

The same instructions have been given with respect to the need to improve the situation of our road infrastructure.

As you must be aware, this problem is at the core of my concerns. The related challenges are multiple, the most acute of them being the inadequacy of financial resources.

However, I am pleased to note that we are also making relentless progress in this sector.

I am therefore satisfied that, during this year ending, over 700 kilometres of roads were asphalted or rehabilitated nationwide. Several related highway engineering structures were also built in the process.

Construction works on the Lékié loop, as well as the Kumba-Ekondo Titi and Babadjou-Bamenda roads are ongoing and will be continued at a satisfactory pace.

Regarding the Ebolowa-Kribi road, negotiations with donors, which for long were stalled by environmental issues, are finally being concluded. All the requisite measures will be taken to ensure that the construction of this road, so eagerly awaited by the populations concerned, effectively starts in 2024.

I recently issued instructions for the rehabilitation of the Ngaoundere-Garoua road. Negotiations are also ongoing with our financial partners

for the completion of construction works on the Mora-Dabanga-Kousseri road and the rehabilitation of the Edea-Kribi and Douala-Bafoussam roads.

The repair of urban road networks is continuing in the towns of Maroua and Ngaoundere. The related programme will extend to other regional headquarters.

Motorway projects will not be left out during the coming year with, particularly, the launching of the construction of the urban section of the Yaounde-Nsimalen motorway and that of Phase 2 of the Yaounde-Douala motorway.

Additionally, faced with the worsening situation, I have instructed the Government to urgently find a lasting solution to the problem of household garbage collection in our cities, in collaboration with Councils and City Councils.

Fellow Cameroonians,

My Dear Compatriots,

Over the past weeks, you were faced with a shortage of petroleum products, suffering many inconveniences as a result. To address this situation, I have instructed the Government to take urgent measures to ensure constant supply of the market.

However, the challenges in the sector are broader and more complex.

You must be aware that to maintain pump prices of fuel at their current levels, which are far below those in neighbouring countries, the State has to make huge financial sacrifices to subsidize petroleum product imports.

The burden of these subsidies weighs heavily on our budget and significantly reduces the much-needed resources to address other problems facing our people.

Last year, the Government increased slightly the pump prices of fuel.

As a result, the subsidy on petroleum products decreased from over 1 000 billion CFA francs in 2022 to around 640 billion CFA francs in 2023.

However, this subsidy continues to weigh heavily on public coffers.

Though we will most certainly have no choice but to reduce it further, we will ensure that the requisite adjustments do not significantly impact the purchasing power of households.

Ultimately, the rehabilitation of SONARA, which must be expedited as I have instructed, should help to improve the situation in this sector.

My Dear Compatriots,

Despite the Government's goodwill, it is clear that the implementation of various projects to meet our people's aspirations faces a major impediment, namely inadequacy of the required financial resources.

This is why I have repeatedly ordered the Government to streamline public spending and find new ways and means of boosting public resources.

Regarding the reduction of public spending, I have strongly reiterated my previous instructions to the Government to reduce recurrent expenditure.

Actions implemented to combat corruption and misappropriation of public funds are essential for protecting public resources. They will be intensified in the coming year.

The Three-Year Integrated Import Substitution Plan for 2024-2026, which I have instructed the Government to implement, is also part of my effort to enable our country to save on its precious resources.

This plan should help to reduce the negative impact of imports on our trade balance by strengthening our food sovereignty. Its deficit is estimated at just over 1 500 billion CFA francs per year.

To increase public resources, there is a need to explore new avenues, given the constraints of broadening the tax base and the slump in oil revenue.

In this regard, solid minerals, especially oil, appear to be an excellent niche for financial resources.

Our country is richly endowed with mineral resources that need to be exploited.

I am delighted that the mining projects I announced last year for the development of the Kribi-Lobé, Bipindi-Grand Zambé, and Mbalm-Nabeba iron ore deposits have been launched.

Improving the business climate is clearly a prerequisite for attracting foreign investment and creating a robust private sector that should facilitate our transition to emergence through dynamic job and wealth creation.

Trust in the judicial system is inevitable for perception of the business climate. As you are aware, the judiciary is one of the pillars of the rule of law.

Therefore, it is imperative that it should act with complete impartiality and should be impervious to any manner of interference. I would like to assure you that, as guarantor of its independence, I will continue to take all the requisite measures to ensure its proper functioning.

My Dear Compatriots,

Allow me to say a few words about the national education sector. Despite the Government's efforts, calm has not been fully restored therein.

Yet, according to stakeholders, the Government has made commendable efforts in this regard.

In addition to the various types of measures taken by the relevant ministries, more than 72 billion CFA francs was disbursed in 2023 to cover related expenses.

An additional amount of 102 billion CFA francs has also been provided in the State budget for the 2024 financial year to cover residual expenditure.

Therefore, it will be difficult for us to accept that a handful of teachers, who seem to have ulterior motives, should continue to hold our children's education hostage.

Let me be clear on this issue. As much as I am committed to ensuring that teachers practise their noble profession under appropriate conditions, I am equally uncompromising about respect for the right of our young people to education. Strong measures will be taken to ensure that our children do not fall victim to substandard education.

Constructive dialogue will also be pursued with the recognized trade unions to address the aspirations and concerns of teachers in a peaceful manner.

My Dear Compatriots,

Regarding safety, numerous road accidents continue to plunge families into mourning and rob the country of precious human resources.

I want to make it clear that this is unacceptable! Once again, I appeal to the sense of responsibility of drivers and bus service operators. All necessary measures must be taken to ensure the safety of passengers and other road users.

The Government, for its part, will not only step up efforts to improve the state of the road network, but will also rigorously apply the necessary preventive and repressive measures.

My Dear Compatriots,

Thanks to the people's active cooperation with our defence and security forces, the situation in the North-West, South-West and Far-North Regions has improved significantly.

It is now possible to calmly implement the reconstruction and development plans for the said regions.

However, atrocities committed by terrorists have not completely disappeared. Unfortunately, civilians are the main victims.

On 6 November 2023, the town of Mamfe was the scene of a barbaric massacre of some twenty civilians in the middle of the night.

I strongly condemn such atrocities, which defy reason and have no justification whatsoever.

I encourage our fellow citizens in the regions affected by terrorism to continue to cooperate with the defence and security forces, whose courage and professionalism I salute.

I reiterate my appeal to armed groups to lay down their arms and join Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Centres. I am pleased to note that an increasing number of these combatants have responded to this call in recent weeks.

For those who persist in criminal activity, be it terrorism or organized crime, the fate that awaits them is not an enviable one. They must know that our firm determination to ensure the security of our fellow citizens will never falter.

Fellow Cameroonians,

My Dear Compatriots,

In a few weeks, our beloved Indomitable Lions will participate in the 34th Edition of the Africa Cup of Nations in Côte d'Ivoire. On behalf of you all, I would like to encourage and urge them to defend our country's flag with courage and honour, as they have in the past.

I wish you all a Happy New Year, 2024.

Long Live the Republic!

Long live Cameroon!

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Biography of President Paul BIYA

His Excellency Paul BIYA was born on 13 February 1933 at Mvomeka'a, Meyomessala Subdivision, Dja-et-Lobo Division, South Region. He is the son of Etienne MVONDO ASSAM and Anastasie EYENGA ELLE.

H.E. Paul B YA is Cameroon's second Head of State. He came to power on 6 November 1982 following the resignation of President Ahmadou AH DJO on 4 November.

Education:

Primary and Secondary Education:

June 1948: C.E.P.E: Catholic School Nden;

1948-1950: St. Tharcissius Preseminary, Edea;

1950-1954: Minor Seminary, Akono ;

June 1953: B.E.P.C;

1954-1956: Lycée Général Leclerc;

June 1955: Baccalauréat 1^{ère} partie;

June 1956: Baccalauréat 2^{ème} partie (philosophy).

Higher Education:

Lycée Louis Le Grand, Paris;

Université Paris Sorbonne (Faculty of Law);

Institut d'Études Politiques, Paris;

Institut des Hautes Études d'Outre Mer.

From which he obtained the following

Academic Qualifications:

1960 : Licence en Droit Public;

1961 : Diplôme de l'Institut d'Études Politiques de Paris;

1962 : Diplôme de l'Institut des Hautes Études d'Outre Mer (HEOM);

1963 : Diplôme d'Études Supérieures en Droit Public.

Decorations:

- Grand Master of National Orders;
- Commander of National Order, exceptional class (Federal Republic of Germany);
- Commander of National Order (Tunisia);
- Grand Cross of the Senegalese National Order of Merit;
- Grand Officer of the Legion of Honour (France);
- Great Commander of the Medal of St-George (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);
- Grand Collar of the Ouissam Mohammedi Order (Kingdom of Morocco);
- Grand Commander of the Order of Nigeria (Federal Republic of Nigeria);
- Doctor Honoris Causa of the University of Maryland (USA);
- Honorary Professor of the University of Beijing (People's Republic of China);
- Holder of several decorations from various other countries.

Career:**October 1962**

Mr. Paul BIYA was appointed Chargé de Mission at the Presidency of the Republic upon his return from Paris.

January 1964

Director of Cabinet of the Minister of National Education, Youth Affairs and Culture;

July 1965

Secretary-General of the Ministry of National Education, Youth Affairs and Culture;

December 1967

Director of the Civil Cabinet of the President of the Republic;

January 1968

While still serving as Director of the Civil Cabinet, Mr. BIYA was appointed Secretary-General of the Presidency of the Republic.

August 1968

Minister, Secretary-General of the Presidency of the Republic

June 1970

Minister of State, Secretary-General of the Presidency of the Republic

June 1975

Prime Minister of the United Republic of Cameroon

June 1979

By virtue of Law No.79/2 of 29 June 1979, the Prime Minister became the Constitutional successor to the President of the Republic.

6 November 1982

Mr. Paul BIYA was sworn in as President of the United Republic of Cameroon, the second President in the history of the country. The ceremony took place at the National Assembly building, before of the people's elected representatives, following the resignation of President Ahmadou AHIDJO on 4 November 1982.

At the time of his accession to power, Mr. Paul BIYA was 1st Vice-President of the Central Committee of the

Cameroon National Union (CNU) and Member of the Political Bureau of the Party.

Elected President of the Republic on 14 January 1984, re-elected on 24 April 1988, 11 October 1992 (first presidential election in Cameroon by direct universal suffrage with multiple candidates),

11 October 1997, 10 October 2004, 9 October 2011 and 7 October 2018;

Elected President of the Cameroon National Union on 14 September 1983;
Elected President of the Cameroon People's Democratic Movement following the transformation of the CNU into CPDM on 24 March 1985 in Bamenda.

By enacting the law on associations and political parties on 19 December 1990, Mr. Paul BIYA restored multiparty politics in Cameroon (since 1 September 1966, the country had been going through an era of de facto one-party politics).

To date, more than 200 political parties have been legalised. The CPDM obtained absolute majority in the March 1997, June 2002, July 2007 and September 2013 legislative elections. Despite these victories, the President of the Republic has always chosen to form inclusive government.

Four parties are represented in Government: the CPDM, NUDP, NADP and FNSC.

Seven parties are represented at the National Assembly: CPDM, SDF, NUDP, CDU, UPC and MDR.

Seven parties are represented in the Senate: CPDM, SDF, NUDP, CDU, MDR, FNSC and NADP.

Publications

Mr. Paul BIYA is author of a political essay, *Communal Liberalism*, published by Editions Marcel Fabre, Lausanne 1987.

The book has been translated into English, German and Hebrew.

In the book, the Head of State announced the advent of the multiparty system (which became effective in 1990) after the interim period of the one-party system. He explained his option for economic liberalism and private initiative while advocating national solidarity, equitable sharing of the fruits of economic growth, social justice, the emergence of a culture based on creativity and the peaceful coexistence of values specific to the various communities that make up the Nation.

Lastly, he reaffirmed the need to modernize the State and maintain cooperation ties with other countries of the world.

Marital Life:

His Excellency Paul BIYA is married to Chan tal Pulchérie BIYA.

He is father of three children: Frank BIYA, Paul BIYA Junior and Anastasie Brenda BIYA EYENGA.

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