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**Participation of the President of the Republic of
Cameroon, H.E. Paul BIYA**

PRESS KIT

A NEW U.S. POLICY IN AFRICA

Without being neglected, but for tactical or economic reasons, sub-Saharan Africa seemed to be on the margins of US foreign policy during decolonisation. This is evidenced by the fact that the United States never signed a defence agreement with the African continent as a whole, as it did with Latin America or Western Europe. Therefore, for a long time, the US military presence in sub-Saharan Africa remained modest.

However, US interest in Africa has been growing since the beginning of the 21st Century, spurred on by the first US-Africa ministerial conference in 1999. The US-Africa dialogue is structured along three pillars:

- The fight against radical Islamism;
- The conquest of a booming African market, with the added need to secure oil supplies;
- Regional stability.

In the end, it is a question of integrating Africa into the circuits of the world economy and actively opposing Islamist terrorism.

This change is based on two relevant concepts:

- Radical Islamism, which is on the rise in the Sahel and the Horn of Africa, can spread to many countries, some of which are major oil producers and border on maritime routes that are essential for the transport of global energy flows;
- Africa's emergence as a strategic region, both in terms of raw material production and energy reserves. As the United States is a country quite vulnerable to energy dependence, it becomes crucial that Africa is a key partner for the United States.

In this respect, the United States has a favourable bias towards Africa, free of a colonial past fraught with painful memories. This is compounded by its support for the independence struggles and the presence of a large African-American minority and its growing effectiveness in American diplomacy.

It is important to consider in the new US strategy in Africa the stated objective of limiting the influence of China and Russia. In this respect, the US-Africa Summit on 13 December 2022 marks a decisive turning point in the deepening of cooperation on major global issues, with a focus on economic, security and health issues. The subjects of debt, inflation, and multilateral economic development relations between private and public actors will have to be debated.

With regard to Cameroon specifically, this summit carries the hope of leading to a significant improvement in American interventions to promote economic development, social peace and security. It is worth recalling that Cameroon arbitrarily lost its preferential access to the US market under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA).

It would be desirable for the American government to reconsider the reality of human rights in Cameroon in order to re-establish a cooperation that is not encumbered by subjective considerations, in order to move towards a more serene climate.

A HISTORICAL REVIEW OF CAMEROON-U.S. COOPERATION

Official bilateral relations between the two countries are longstanding. They date back to before the independence of Cameroon as a State, in particular to 1957, the year of an American consular presence in our country. The said relations are diversified and cover various domains notably diplomatic, political, economic and technical.

The United States of America is a federal republic made up of about fifty states and the Federal District of Columbia. This "continental state" stretches from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico, and also includes Alaska and the Hawaiian Islands.

Institutions

- **The Executive Branch:** The President is both the Head of State and the Head of Government. He is elected by a college of representatives (who are elected directly by each state) for a four-year term. The President is the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. His powers are controlled by the Parliament. The Council of Ministers is appointed by the President, subject to approval by the Senate.

- **Legislative Branch:** The legislature is bicameral in the United States. Congress consists of the Senate (upper house) and the House of Representatives (lower house). The Senate has the power to confirm or reject presidential nominations and ratify treaties; the House of Representatives has only the right to initiate bills that may be rejected or amended by the Senate. The President has veto power over

legislation passed by Congress. Congress can override his veto by a two-thirds majority.

- **Judiciary:** The federal judiciary operates separately from the Executive and Legislative branches, but often works with them as required by the Constitution. Federal laws are passed by Congress and enacted by the President. The judiciary decides the constitutionality of federal laws and settles other disputes concerning federal laws. However, the Judges depend on the Federal Executive Branch to enforce the decisions of the Courts. The Courts decide what actually happened and what to do about it.

- **The Government:** Following the Presidential elections of 3 November 2020, H.E. Joseph Robinette BIDEN Jr. born on 20 November 1942 and belonging to the Democratic Party is the 46th President of the United States of America, since 20 January 2021, date of his inauguration. He replaces Republican Donald TRUMP, who was President from January 2017 to January 2021; Mrs KAMALA HARRIS, running mate of President-elect Joe BIDEN, is the 49th Vice-President of the United States, replacing Republican Michael (Mike) PENCE. H.E. Antony BLINKEN is the head of the US Department of State, since 26 January 2021, replacing H.E. MIKE POMPEO; Ms Mary Catherine MOLY PHEE is the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs. Mrs Linda THOMAS-GREENFIELD is the Permanent Ambassador of the United States to the UN and Mr Jake SULLIVAN is the National Security Advisor of the United States. Retired Army General Lloyd AUSTIN is the head of the Secretary of Defence (Pentagon), as of 22 January 2021.

DIPLOMATIC COOPERATION

Official exchanges between the United States and Cameroon began with the establishment of an American Consulate in Yaounde in 1957. Diplomatic relations were established at the ambassadorial level in 1960. Also, Cameroon opened two Diplomatic Missions in the United States that year: an Embassy in Washington and a Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York. In return, the United States opened its Embassy in Yaounde and created an Embassy Office in Douala in 1964.

At present, the Ambassador of Cameroon in Washington D.C. is H.E. Henri ETOUNDI ESSOMBA, appointed by Decree of the President of the Republic n° 2016/193 of 11 April 2016.

On the American side, Ambassador Christopher John LAMORA arrived in Yaounde on 05 March 2022 and presented the Advanced Copy of his Letters of Credence to MINREX on 21 March 2022.

Apart from this diplomatic presence, many high level Authorities from both countries have made visits, signed numerous Agreements or held bilateral and multilateral consultations. For example, all the Heads of State of Cameroon have made official and working visits to the United States.

EXCHANGE OF VISITS

On the Cameroonian side

- The visit of President Paul BIYA to the United States of America in May 1991, during which the University of Maryland awarded him the prestigious title of Doctor "Honoris Causa".

- The official visit to the United States on 20 March 2003, crowned by a face-to-face meeting at the White House between President Paul BIYA and his American counterpart, President George Walker BUSH.

- The participation of President Paul BIYA and the First Lady in the First United States/Africa Leaders' Summit, at the invitation of President Barack OBAMA, from 04 to 06 August 2014 in Washington D.C.

- The participation of President Paul BIYA, at the invitation of his American counterpart, President Barack OBAMA, in the United States/Africa Business Forum held on the sidelines of the 71st Session of the United Nations General Assembly, on 21 September 2016 in New York.

- The participation, on 16 and 17 November 2017 in Washington D.C., at the invitation of his American counterpart, of H.E. MBELLA MBELLA, Minister of External Relations, at the Ministerial Meeting on Trade, Security and Governance in Africa.

- On 06 February 2019, at the invitation of the American Secretary of State H.E. Mike POMPEO, an official Cameroonian Delegation led by H.E. Felix MBAYU, Minister Delegate to the Minister of External Relations in charge of Cooperation with the Commonwealth took part in the Ministerial Meeting of the International Coalition against the Islamic State, in Washington D.C.

- From 18 to 21 June 2019, the Minister of Finance, Mr Louis Paul MOTAZE led, as Personal Representative of the Head of State, the Cameroonian delegation that took part in the 12th United States-Africa Summit on the promotion of trade and investment, in Maputo, Mozambique, under the theme "Advancing a Resilient and Sustainable Partnership between the United States of America and Africa".

- From 03 to 07 August 2019 in Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire), on the Very High Instructions of the Head of State, the Minister of Trade, Mr. Luc Magloire MBARGA ATANGANA led the official Cameroonian delegation to the 18th AGOA Ministerial Forum under the theme "AGOA and the Future: Developing a New Paradigm to Guide Trade and Investment Relations between the US and Africa".

- From 18 to 28 November 2019 and on the Very High Instructions of the Head of State, a high-ranking Cameroonian Ministerial delegation led by H.E. Felix MBAYU, MINDELCOM/MINREX, stayed in the United States, as part of a Special Political and Economic Information Mission, in order to attract American investors to invest more in the disaster-stricken North-West and South-West Regions ;

- From 11 to 13 December 2019, on the Very High Instructions of the Head of State, the Governor of the North-West Region, Mr Adolphe LELE LAFRIQUE led a delegation to Philadelphia in the USA.

On the American side

There are regular visits to Cameroon by the Under Secretaries of State for African Affairs, as well as senior American Executive and Legislative officials in charge of security, refugee management and migration issues.

The most salient ones are as follows:

- On 06 September 2014, a working visit by H.E. Mrs Linda THOMAS-GREENFIELD, Under Secretary of State for African Affairs at the US Department of State, to examine the possibilities for continued strengthening of economic and security cooperation, particularly in the fight against BOKO HARAM.

- From 16 to 19 March 2019, working visit to Cameroon by Ambassador TIBOR NAGY, US Under Secretary of State for African Affairs.

- From 15 to 20 February 2012, working visit to Cameroon by H.E. Mrs Eileen CHAMBERLAIN DONAHOE, US Representative to the UN Human Rights Council and Special Envoy of President Barack OBAMA.

- On 28 March 2012, working visit to Cameroon by General CARTER F. HARM, Commander of US Forces in Africa.

- From 22 to 25 May 2013, visit of Mrs Cynthia H. AKUETTEH, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of African Affairs.

- From 25 to 28 August 2013, visit to Cameroon of H.E. Eric GOOSBY, Ambassador-at-Large, Emissary of President Barack OBAMA and Coordinator of the United States Global Programme on AIDS.



- From 07 to 09 January 2014, visit of Mrs Robin MEYER, Director of the Office of Central Africa Affairs in the US Department of State.
- On 11 December 2014, visit to Cameroon by General David RODRIGUEZ, Commander of US Military Forces in Africa.
- On 17 October 2015, General RODRIGUEZ paid a second visit to Yaounde, in connection with the deployment of 300 American soldiers in Cameroon, more precisely in the town of Garoua, with the mission of training Cameroonian soldiers in appropriate combat techniques to neutralise BOKO HARAM.
- On 26 October 2015, visit to Yaounde by Mr Stuart SYMINGTON, Deputy Assistant in the US State Department in charge of African Affairs, Special Representative of the United States in the Central African Republic.
- From 17 to 19 April 2016, visit to Cameroon of H.E. Mrs Samantha POWER, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the United States to the United Nations, member of President Barack OBAMA's Cabinet.
- From 11 to 14 July 2016, working visit of Mrs Anne RICHARD, US Under Secretary for Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM).
- From 5 to 7 July 2017, visit of Ms Jane KAMINSKI, Regional Programme Manager, Bureau of Counter Terrorism and Countering Violent Extremism, US Department of State and Mr Calvin WILSON, Senior Correction Advisor, US Department of Justice
- On 18 and 19 February 2018, a working visit to Cameroon by an American Parliamentary Delegation, led by the Honourable Steve RUSSELL, Republican Member of Congress and Representative of the 4th District of the State of Oklahoma, as part of a tour of the Lake Chad Basin Commission Sub-Region.
- On 21 and 22 March 2018, a delegation from the United States Africa Military Command (AFRICOM) visited Cameroon. The delegation was led by Ambassador ALEXANDER LASKARIS, Deputy Commander for Civil-Military Engagement.
- From 19 to 21 February 2019, a working visit to Cameroon by a delegation of American officials from the Senate Armed Services Committee, composed of Ms. CHIDI BLYDEN, Ms. Maggie Mc NAMARA, Mr. Mark MOREHOUSE and Mr. Mike LOCONSOLO.
- From 29 June to 02 July 2019, working visit to Cameroon by a high-level delegation of the American Congress, led by Congresswoman Karen BASS, Democrat, influential Member, representative of the State of California (37th District), and Chairperson of the Sub-Committee on African Affairs of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the American Congress.

SOME ACTIONS TAKEN

- Ratification of the Agreement on Air Transport between Cameroon and the USA;

- High Agreement of the Head of State for the implementation of the principle of reciprocity of the duration of visas for holders of diplomatic or service passports between Cameroon and the USA, notably: the issuance of visas with a validity of one year with multiple entries for American holders of diplomatic and/or service passports; the extension of the validity of long stay visas to one year for American citizens; the eventual possibility of renewing tourist visas without the obligation to leave the Cameroonian territory;

- Follow-up on the operationalisation of the Public Health Emergency Operation Centre (PHEC) in Yaounde built in 2017 with the support of the American Government, for a value of 2.6 million US dollars (1.5 billion CFAF);

- Implementation in Cameroon of the 2nd phase of the American programme "McGOVERN-DOLE INTERNATIONAL FOOD FOR EDUCATION" financed to the tune of 27 million US dollars (14 billion CFAF). This programme of the US Department of Agriculture, which aims at supporting the Cameroonian Government's initiatives in the area of food security and self-sufficiency in schools for increased literacy among children, is implemented in our country by the NGO "NASCENT SOLUTIONS Inc". It is intended for four regions (Adamawa, North-West, North and East), i.e. 45 districts, with a target of 125,000 primary schools.



TECHNICAL COOPERATION

Since 1957, exchanges between Cameroon and the United States have taken place through technical assistance. Cameroon benefits from American technical assistance in several sectors such as peace and security; promotion of democracy; economic and human investment; socio-cultural cooperation and health.

Peace and security

In the area of military and security in Cameroon, American assistance covers the training of the Cameroonian military in the fight against organised crime and terrorism (BIR), maritime security, participation in peacekeeping operations and the prevention of illicit trafficking in so-called radioactive and nuclear products. As part of the reinforcement of the security mechanism in the Gulf of Guinea, the Government of Cameroon and the ECCAS countries, in partnership with the naval component of the American Forces Command for Africa (AFRICOM), conducted a maritime security exercise called "OBANGAME EXPRESS 2013" from 20 to 28 February 2013. The exercise was repeated in 2016.

Furthermore, the United States has distinguished itself as a leading partner in the fight against the BOKO HARAM nebula. This partnership has manifested itself in the training of personnel from various Cameroonian administrations on counter-terrorism, as well as in ongoing support for military equipment.

Economic and human investment

American official development assistance to Cameroon in this sector covers education, health, sports, tourism, communication, agriculture, environmental protection, energy, transport, development of small and medium enterprises, port inspection and humanitarian action.

Academic and cultural cooperation

With regard to higher education, it should be noted that Cameroon is the main Central African country with the highest number of students enrolled in American universities, with about 1,800 students for the 2021-2022 academic year.

The official launch on 28 July 2021 by the Minister of Public Works Emmanuel NGANOU DJOUMESSI in the presence of the Chargée d'Affaires a.i. of the USA in Cameroon, Mrs Mary DASCHBACH of the first joint Master's Programme in Engineering Management in Cameroon, offered by the National Advanced School of Public Works, in partnership with Golden Gate University of San Francisco in the United States of America, is to be welcomed.

Officially, close to 5,500 Cameroonians have travelled to the United States for the study programmes. Apart from these figures, the Cameroonian population that has travelled to America for various reasons is estimated at over 600,000 people.

In addition, the Post's Consular Service in Washington issued about 8,800 visas to Americans travelling to Cameroon in 2020. That same year, it recorded 12,200 visitors, including 1,500 Americans of Cameroonian origin and 750 American officials. It should be noted that about 1,400 American tourists visit Cameroon every year.

As part of the reconnection of African-Americans to the land of their ancestors, the American NGO ARK JAMMERS organised trips to Cameroon in 2011 and 2012, in which more than a hundred African-Americans took part.

The city of Yaounde also hosted from 27 to 30 November 2021 the Congress of the Return of Afro-descendants and Peoples from the "Kongo Basin".

On another level, several cultural, educational and professional exchange programmes are offered by the American Government to non-American citizens who wish to go to the United States. Examples include: the Young African Leaders Program (YALI-MWF-RLC), the Hubert H. HUMPHEY Fellowship, the FULBRIHT Programme, the Community Engagement Exchange Programme (CEE), the TECHWOMEN and TECHGIRLS Programmes, the International Writing Residency Programme, the Pan-African Youth Leadership Programme (PAYLP), the International Visitor Leaders Programme (IVLP), etc.

Cooperation in the field of health

Cooperation between Cameroon and the USA is based, among other things, on the financing and technical support of several projects in this field.

The Reference Centre for the Prevention and Treatment of HIV/AIDS and Public Health Emergencies in Cameroon is supported by the US Government under a Memorandum of Understanding signed in May 2013. The BILL and MELINDA GATES Foundation has contributed for some years now to the financing of medical training for the benefit of personnel from certain Central African countries. This programme is monitored jointly by MINESUP and MINSANTE. Another partnership agreement with the American NGO called Clinton Health Initiative was signed in 2014.

The American Government, through the PEPFAR/CDC programme, has invested nearly CFAF 2.5 billion in the renovation and equipment of the National Public Health Laboratory in Yaounde. On 17 November 2017, the Chargé d'Affaires of the US Embassy handed over the keys of the Quality Assurance Centre to the then MINSANTE.

The Government of the United States on 11 January 2018 donated CFAF 1,091 billion to the MAGRIBI ICO EYE Institute (MICEI) Hospital in Obak, Lekié to fund the care of people with eye diseases in Cameroon.

At the invitation of the Head of State, H.E. Paul BIYA, the Hospital Ship of the American NGO Mercy SHIPS carried out a 10-month humanitarian mission in Cameroon (September 2017-June 2018). The mission provided free health care to nearly 5,000 Cameroonian patients with rare diseases from all ten regions of the country. Mercy SHIPS teams performed nearly 3,000 surgeries (maxillofacial, plastic and reconstructive surgeries, obstetric fistulas, orthopaedics) during their ten-month mission in Cameroon, and contributed to the capacity building of more than 1,338 doctors and nurses.

On 03 December 2018, the Prime Minister, Philemon YANG and the US Ambassador to Cameroon, Peter Henry BALERIN, inaugurated the National Public Health Emergency Operations Centre, which is the result of a CFAF 02 billion contribution from the US Government's Defense Threat Reduction Agency.

Support for the National Response Plan against COVID-19

Since the occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Cameroonian Government (MINSANTE), in partnership with UNDP and the Global Security Initiative (managed by the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention - CDC) has developed a National Response Plan against COVID-19, through the establishment of a Coordination Unit at the Emergency Operations Centre.

The United States made available to the Cameroonian Government the sum of 120 thousand US dollars (nearly 71 million CFAF) plus an additional envelope of 590 million

FCFA via USAID, within the framework of the National Response Plan against the Coronavirus. These resources were used for the technical training of medical personnel and about 700 Cameroonian field epidemiologists, the supply of nearly 1,000 COVID-19 test kits, ongoing technical support, the supply of medical equipment to hospitals and COVID-19 treatment centres, and the supply of nearly 391,200 doses of ASTRAZENECA vaccine.

In the field of energy and transport infrastructure

- The American companies Environmental and Chemical Corporation (EEC) and General Electric (GE), in collaboration with the Cameroon Water Utilities Company (CAMWATER), carried out the Akomnyada drinking water supply project, to improve the drinking water system of the city of Yaounde.

- The American company ACROW Bridges is carrying out the project to build 55 metal bridges in various localities in Cameroon.

- The American Government has shown interest and is supporting Cameroon in the framework of the Lagdo Dam rehabilitation project for an amount of CFAF 100 billion through the General Electric Company (GE). The said project aims at renewing the existing equipment with the option of increasing the current capacity of the dam from 75MW to 80MW.

- Within the framework of a Development Agreement, Cameroon and the American company HYDROMINE signed, on 6 April 2015, an Investment Contract for the construction of a hydroelectric dam at Grand EWENG on the Sanaga River, for an amount of US\$3 billion. This project aims at producing 1800 MW of electricity and creating more than 120,000 direct and indirect jobs.

- Cameroon has undertaken, thanks to the assistance of the American partner, a vast project for the construction of an efficient integrated railway and transport network, covering the entire national space while being open to neighbouring countries, with a view to stimulating intra-regional trade. The Government of Cameroon chose the American company GENERAL ELECTRIC Transports for the acquisition and supply of 09 nine GE C30-ACi locomotives for CAMRAIL (with a budget of 33 million US dollars), within the framework of the Africa Cup of Nations 2021.

- It is also worth noting the important contribution of the American company BOEING Consulting, which is accompanying the State of Cameroon in the restructuring of the national airline CAMAIR-Co.

- The effective ratification by the HEAD OF STATE (by Decree N°2018/738 of 18 December 2018), of the Air Transport Agreement between Cameroon and the United States of America, signed on 16 February 2006. This will enable the revival of cooperation in the strategic sector of air transport.