

# **Statement by the Head of State at the solemn ceremony to receive freed Cameroonian and Chinese hostages at Unity Palace**

*Yaounde, 13 October 2014*

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Permit me first of all to welcome you to the Palace of the Republic.

Today is a day of joy, joy equalled only by the anguish and anxiety which gripped us throughout your detention.

**The Ambassador of the Republic of China,**

It is with pleasure and joy that I hand over to you your compatriots who were detained under awful conditions. I would like to say that they were able to survive thanks to their courage, their will and their determination. I congratulate them for that and wish them good luck for the future. I wish them a safe return to your great country.

My dear compatriots,

I cannot hide the joy we feel to see you back safe and sound. Mrs ALI, the Lamido of Kolofata and their entire families are back among us. You demonstrated courage, endurance and faith in God. That is what saved you.

All this, all what is happening and which brings us great joy, we should bear in mind, is thanks to the bravery of our armed forces. Our army is fighting courageously day and night to ensure that Cameroon remains a country of peace and stability.

We also owe this good result to the commitment of the Cameroonian people, be they in the North, the South, the East or the West, and especially the people of the Far North who are going through the ordeal everyday but still provide commendable support to the forces of law and order.

It is all this that has enabled us to see you again. We cannot hide our joy. We wish you a happy return to your families and to your countries.

For its part, the Government of Cameroon assures you that it will not relent in its fight against Boko Haram until it is completely wiped out.

I wish you good luck and a safe return to your families.