

SPEECH BY THE HEAD OF STATE

**In Response to New Year Wishes
from the Diplomatic Corps**

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Yaounde, 6 January 2023

- 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 wishes for good health and success in 2023.

Long live international cooperation!
Long live international solidarity!

Thank you for your attention.

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