

PRESS RELEASE

THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC, HIS EXCELLENCY PAUL BIYA, chaired a Council of Ministers meeting today, Thursday, 15 March 2018, at 12 noon at Unity Palace. Besides the President's closest aides, the meeting was attended by the Prime Minister, the Vice-Prime Minister, Ministers of State, Ministers, Ministers Delegate and Secretaries of State.

The lone agenda item was the Special Statement by the HEAD OF STATE.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC started by urging the ministers who have been newly promoted as well as those maintained to work diligently in order to meet the multiple challenges confronting our country and to strive to be worthy of the trust bestowed upon them. Despite an unfavourable global economic context, the Head of State instructed the Government to remain focused on the improvement of the people's living conditions, the fight against unemployment and the consolidation of economic performance.

THE HEAD OF STATE urged the Government to pursue the smooth implementation of the Programme concluded with the IMF and underscored the urgent need to finalize the implementation of major structuring projects, the Emergency Growth Acceleration Plan and the Special Youth Plan.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC welcomed the operationalization of the Kribi Deep Sea Port and the second bridge over the Wouri. He indicated that those projects and many others that have been or are soon to be completed may be commissioned this year.

Despite these excellent performances, he stressed on the need to continue to put a special focus on providing outreach services, such as water, electricity, health, and road infrastructure.

Talking about the desire frequently expressed by the population to be closely involved in running the affairs that directly impact their daily lives, the **PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC** stated that the creation of the Ministry of Decentralization and Local Development is geared towards speedily addressing these repeated calls.

He stressed that, in the short term, he was expecting that Ministry to submit detailed proposals and a timeline for fast-tracking the on-going decentralization process.

THE HEAD OF STATE instructed the Government to take all necessary measures to ensure that the various elections scheduled this year are conducted in total calm and security. He expressed satisfaction with the effective start of the work of the Constitutional Council and instructed that necessary resources be provided to ensure the optimal functioning of this important institution.

Regarding security, the **HEAD OF STATE** commended the bravery of the defence and security forces, which contributed to drastically curbing the atrocities perpetrated by criminal groups in the Far North, North-West and South-West Regions. He ordered that necessary efforts be pursued to ensure that economic and social activities return to normalcy in those regions.

Regarding preparations for AFCON 2019, the **PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC** expressed satisfaction with the progress made thus far and urged the various government services concerned to step up those efforts for Cameroon to offer to Africa and the world a grand and excellent football festival.

Regarding governance, the **PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC** strongly reiterated his instructions to the Government on the need for judicious use of public resources, reduction of public spending and the continued fight against corruption. He recalled the cardinal values that must always guide the action of Members of Government and by which they will be judged, namely the pursuit of the general interest and efficiency, solidarity, team spirit and respect for hierarchy. Lastly, he urged them to demonstrate full and total commitment in order to provide concrete answers that meet the legitimate aspirations of the people, while underscoring that such is and should always be the ultimate goal of their action.

Yaounde, 15 March 2018

The seal is circular with a double border. The outer border contains the text 'REPUBLIQUE DU CAMEROUN' at the top and 'LE MINISTRE SECRETAIRE GENERAL' at the bottom. The inner border contains 'PRESIDENCE DE LA REPUBLIQUE' at the top and 'LE MINISTRE SECRETAIRE GENERAL' at the bottom. In the center is the national emblem of Cameroon, featuring a shield with a star, a palm tree, and a banana tree, flanked by two lions. Below the emblem is the text 'LE MINISTRE SECRETAIRE GENERAL'.

Ferdinand NGOH NGOH

Minister, Secretary General of the
Presidency of the Republic