

## ICCASU II - Yaoundé, Cameroon, 12-14 December 2017

2nd International Conference on Sustainable Urbanization in Canada, China and Africa: "Smart Urban Development: From Local to Global Actions"

# NEWSLETTER

13 December 2017

## ICCASU II, Let's go!

*The second International Conference on Canadian, Chinese and African Sustainable Urbanization (ICCASU II) kicked off yesterday in Yaoundé.*

### The Promise of Flowers



A major innovation of ICCASU II - the training sessions organized from 9 to 11 December 2017 at the Yaoundé Conference Centre - have been a success all along. The said training sessions augur well for an expected success which is taking shape during the second edition of ICCASU which has for general theme: "Smart

Urban Development: From local to global actions." The figures reported support our optimism. .

The closing ceremony of the training workshop organized as a prelude to the conference itself, which started Tuesday, 12 December 2017 at the Conference Centre in Yaoundé, made it possible to appreciate the enthusiasm of the urban stakeholders in Cameroon.

While 135 participants were initially expected, 243 urban stakeholders were finally registered in 15 workshops instead of the 17 planned, supervised by 24 trainers. The affluence of the workshop on urban journalism is a good illustration. Instead of 30



participants, the training which held on Monday, 11 December 2017 at the Film Library of the Ministerial Building No. 1 was attended by 53 professionals of the microphone and the pen.

Are these figures flowers which announce an abundant harvest for Cameroon at the end of the conference? Let us just wait and see!

### *Speeches*

The opening ceremony of the ICCASU II conference was attended by several personalities from Cameroon and abroad. It was the sixth Deputy to the Government Delegate to the Yaoundé City Community, Jean Ngougo, who opened the ball. The municipal councillor was followed by the two co-presidents of the conference Alioune Badiane and Huhua Cao. These two co-founders of the International Conference on Canadian, Chinese and African Sustainable Urbanization were followed by Allan Cain, representative of the University of Ottawa, where the first edition of ICCASU took place in 2015. UN-Habitat was represented by its program director, Raf Tuts. Her Excellency Nathalie O'Neill, High Commissioner of Canada to Cameroon preceded the representative of the Prime Minister, Head of Government, Jean Claude Mbwentchou, Cameroonian Minister of Housing and Urban Development who opened the conference.

### *Audience*



The absence of the Prime Minister, Head of Government, Philemon Yang, at the opening ceremony of the ICCASU II conference is no indication of a lack of interest in urban affairs in Cameroon. The Prime Minister received in audience the ICCASU leaders on Tuesday, 12 December 2017 in the afternoon at the Star Building (the headquarters of the Prime Minister). A strong delegation led by the president of ICCASU, Jean Claude Mbwentchou.

### *No Respite*



The first day of the ICCASU II conference in Yaoundé was a full day. The 500 participants did not have a moment of respite as sportsmen usually do before grabbing each other in a ring or kicking each other on a football field. Very early in the morning, they besieged the Conference Centre at Mount Nkolnyada, where the National Station of the CRTV had preceded them to set up some antenna slots. Once registered, they took part in the very colourful opening ceremony. After the cocktail offered for the occasion, they went straight to work, in the various rooms (four in total) reserved for the occasion.

## *The Tripartite*

It is the legendary tripartite hall of the Yaoundé Conference Centre that hosted the opening ceremony of the other Canada, China and Africa tripartite conference. The tripartite hall had already hosted the tripartite meeting between the government, opposition political parties and civil society in 1991. At the time the nascent Cameroonian opposition demanded the organization of a sovereign national conference. The said tripartite conference was chaired by the prime minister at the time, Sadou Hayatou. It was during the tripartite conference that the constitutional revision which produced the current fundamental law, organizing the institutional architecture in force in Cameroon, started.

## *Rhythm at the Conference Centre*

As the Cameroonians know, the opening ceremony of ICCASU II saw the presentation of many traditional dance groups at the top of Mount Nkolnyada. The four cultural areas in the country were represented.

## *Exposition*



The Hall of the first floor of the Conference Centre hosts an exhibition as part of the ICCASU II session. There one can find the Special Council Support Fund for Mutual Assistance (FEICOM), official sponsor of ICCASU II; but also

MINHDU, the Ministry of Water and Energy, Hydro-Mekin, On Spot Enterprise and private economic operators in the clothing sector.

## *Agenda Of The Day*

The program of the second day of the ICCASU II conference provides for the resumption of work on Wednesday, 13 December at 9 am at the conference centre in Yaoundé, with a MINHDU session scheduled to take place from 4:30 PM to 6:30 PM and, a gala evening from 7:00 PM at the Mont-Febe Hotel.



## Excerpts from the Opening Speech by Mr. Jean Claude Mbwentchou, Minister of Housing and Urban Development, Personal Representative of HE Mr. Prime Minister, Head of Government

"Choosing Cameroon as the first African country to host the ICCASU II conference, represents a victory for Cameroonian diplomacy so well led by its leader, His Excellency Paul BIYA, President of the Republic. It is a mark of recognition of the efforts made by the Government of the Republic to promote sustainable urban development.



This commendable initiative also reflects the willingness and commitment of the United Nations to support African States in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted in September 2015 in New York. It is the New Urban Agenda for the next 20 years, adopted at the third international conference on housing and sustainable urban development (HABITAT III), which was held in Quito, Ecuador in October 2016 for the structural transformation of African cities to make them real engines of development. All of these are aimed at making cities more inclusive, safer, more resilient and more sustainable. This means that most of our states are in the initial phase of implementing the said agenda.

"The management of urbanization is a long, costly and complex process and the challenges of sustainable development must and can be met, provided cities play their role fully. But urban investment must be organized, programmed and coordinated, and for this we must, in the planning of such development, adopt real urban policies and strategies, at both national and local levels. That is why, once again, I am convinced that there is no inevitability: all countries must develop coherent and ambitious urban policies and mobilize the necessary resources for their implementation. Cameroon, for its part, has already formally committed to this by launching, since 2016, the process of preparation of its National Urban Policy with the support of UN-HABITAT.

There is no doubt that one of the major objectives of ICCASU-II is for African countries to make the most of Canada's and China's good practices in sustainable urban development. And for those countries which, like Cameroon, have embarked on the reform of legislation and regulations on urban planning, this will be the place to capitalize on the benefits of the experiences of other countries."

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