

REPUBLIQUE DU CAMEROUN

Paix – Travail – Patrie

**MINISTERE DE L'HABITAT ET
DU DEVELOPPEMENT URBAIN**

REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON

Peace – Work – Fatherland

**MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND
URBAN DEVELOPMENT**

STATEMENT BY Mr.

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MINISTER OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

ON THE OCCASION OF THE 2018 NEW WISHES

PRESENTATION CEREMONY

Yaoundé, 24 January 2018

Madam Minister of State Property, Surveys and Land Tenure;
Mr. Secretary General;
Mr. Board Chair of SIC;
General Managers;
Government Delegates;
Honourable Members of Parliament;
Lord and Lady Mayors;
Presidents of Professional Orders;
Ladies and Gentlemen, dear Aides;
Distinguished guests,

I will like to say how happy we are, Madam Secretary of State and I, to be in your midst for this established customary tradition of presentation of New Year wishes.

Permit me first to warmly welcome the Minister of State Property, Surveys and Land Tenure whose presence here significantly adds glamour to this ceremony. I equally extend greetings to the invited players of the urban sub-sector and to officials of MINH DU from all corners of the national territory.

I will also like to say how very touched I am by the Secretary General's statement addressed to me and to Madam Secretary of State on your behalf. In return, please accept my wishes of perfect health, happiness and prosperity for each and every one of you and your respective families. I also address a thought to aides who are unavoidably absent or far removed from here.

Lastly and sadly, the year just ended swept along some of our staff members. Please join me to pay tribute to their memory and pray the Almighty, in His infinite mercy to grant them a place in Heaven. Accordingly, shall we all rise to observe a minute of silence.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Staff members,

Needless revisiting the detailed balance sheet presented by the Secretary General. However, let me use the opportunity afforded by this ceremony to cast a lucid glance at the major activities carried out during fiscal 2017 against a very difficult backdrop like the Secretary General noted.

In this regard, the success of the Second International Conference on Sustainable Urbanization in Canada, China and Africa (ICCCASU II) that Cameroon just hosted, has been unanimously recognized and commended. Need we recall that such success is the fruit of a process initiated one year ago under the lofty impetus of the President of the Republic, H. E. Paul BIYA and is also fuelled by the fact that its preparation was via a participatory, open and controlled process that made it possible to navigate the triple challenge of organization, participation and expected outcomes.

Overall, the main spin-offs of the ICCCASU II conference, coordinated by the Right Honourable Philemon YANG, Prime Minister and Head of Government, include the establishment in Yaoundé of the Regional Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Urban Development in Africa, whose essential missions consist in training, applied inter-disciplinary research and organizational assistance to urbanization.

Ladies and Gentlemen, with regard to effective establishment of the Centre, permit me to thank the Minister of State Property, Surveys and Land Tenure for the steps taken to allocate and secure the land for construction of the Institution.

I also avail myself of this opportunity to thank the Minister of Higher Education, Chancellor of Academic Orders, for committing to provide academic tutelage for the Centre.

Besides, at the end of ICCCASU II, the Minister of Housing and Urban Development was designated as ICCCASU Chair for the next two years. We dedicated this distinction to the President of the Republic, His Excellency Paul BIYA. Crowned with this important distinction that spells huge responsibilities for Cameroon to defend the values and ideals of ICCCASU throughout the world until 2019, we are preparing to participate in the World Urban Forum in February 2018 in Kuala Lumpur-Malaysia. We shall leverage that opportunity to find partners for the Centre.

I cannot wrap up without thanking the Prime Minister and Head of Government who not only afforded me the opportunity to personally represent him during ICCCASU II deliberations, but also permitted me to report on the major conclusions of the conference during the

Cabinet Meeting of 28 December 20117 after which he tasked me to take steps towards effective establishment of the Regional Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Urban Development in Africa. Accordingly, I urge the Secretary General to continue the efforts already initiated in that regard.

At the same time, like the Secretary General pointed out, concrete results have been achieved, with some of the most important being:

- Completion of **1,520** low-cost houses in Yaoundé, Douala, Limbe, Sangmelima, Bamenda and Bafoussam, with Chinese Cooperation;
- Rehabilitation of **35,648 km** of tarred road networks in Yaoundé, Douala, Monatélé, Tcholiré, Ngaoundéré, Tignère and Galim Tignère;
- Completion of studies on construction of the urban section of the Yaoundé-Nsimalen highway.

By the way, I should also note the satisfactory pursuit of our major projects, notably the Government Project to construct 10,000 low-cost houses; construction of drainage infrastructure in Yaoundé and Douala; construction of the open country section of the Yaoundé-Nsimalen highway and construction of the access road to the Olembé stadium in preparation for AFCON 2019.

Dear staff members, I will like to tell you that I appreciate the true worth of your support to me and to Madam Secretary Of State in successfully accomplishing this mandate entrusted to us by the Head of State, His Excellency Paul BIYA. The results obtained are the fruit of team work and I encourage you to keep it up and even strengthen it.

Also, on behalf of the Head of State and the Prime Minister and Head of Government, I wish to extend hearty thanks to you for the abiding efforts you deploy and, I must admit, the sometimes invisible sacrifices you make for our country's outreach. The results we achieve under very difficult conditions are thanks to your professionalism. Let me reassure you that your work is very much appreciated by the highest hierarchy.

I also bid gratitude to all support staff of the Ministry, particularly the secretaries, the security personnel, drivers and cleaners for their

devotion and sense of quality work.

While we have scored successes in 2017 in implementing our projects, huge challenges still lie ahead as we seek to achieve proper management of urban development and improve the living conditions and environment of urban dwellers, clearly stated in Vision 2035 and confirmed in the Growth and Employment Strategy Paper.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear staff members,

The year 2018 is special in various respects:

First, 2018 is the last year of the seven-year mandate of the Head of State's Great Achievements strongly supported by Cameroonians in 2011. It is thus a **balance sheet** year.

Regarding balance sheet, it should be noted that over the last six years and in keeping with the growth pace of its budgetary resources, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development initiated, on the **lofty instructions of the Head of State**, the process to modernize our two major metropolises, namely Douala and Yaoundé, while also accelerating the upgrade of infrastructure in regional headquarters and in secondary towns. No effort has been spared to enable Cameroonian cities better play their role as economic drivers and also to carry out appropriate actions to improve the wellbeing of our fellow citizens that inhabit land-connected neighbourhoods that do not meet minimum habitability standards.

Over the past six years, like I said, we have undertaken grouped projects relating to:

- decongestion of main access roads into main cities, notably Yaoundé, Bafoussam and Bamenda for a total distance of **16.4 km**;
- rehabilitation of urban centres and construction of major junctions in Yaoundé, Douala, Garoua, Maroua, Limbe and Kumba for a total distance of **31.9 km**;
- rehabilitation of **34.986** km of road networks in Yaoundé, Maroua, Bamenda, Douala and Mbalmayo as part of the Urban Sector Development and Water Supply Project (PDUE), with the assistance of the World Bank;

- rehabilitation of a total **42,572** km of road networks in Buea in the run up to celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of reunification;
- completed construction of **17.4 km** of access roads and **60,000 m²** of parking lots and green spaces around the Limbe Omnisports stadium in preparation for AFCON 2016 ;
- construction of **2,220** houses in Yaoundé, Douala, Limbe, Bafoussam, Bamenda and Sangmélima;
- construction of **64,4km** of drains in Maroua, Mbalmayo and Yaoundé;
- ongoing sanitation and storm drainage works in Yaoundé and Douala;
- ongoing construction of the open country section of the Yaoundé-Nsimalen highway.

As you can see, our achievements across the national territory are concrete and useful and thus constitute a sure bet for the success of the Great Achievements programme in the urban sub-sector.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Staff members,

Second, 2018 is an election year. The elections challenge us primarily in respect of project implementation monitoring. Projects have to start as quickly as possible and be completed within prescribed deadlines. To do so, we need to adopt new working attitudes and methods and become more proactive, anticipatory and responsive in project monitoring, beginning from bid calls to provisional acceptance of works and contracts.

Lastly, 2018 is pivotal in the organization of AFCON 2019 in terms of intensification of preparations and thus help keep the promise made by the top Cameroonian sportsman to host the football get-together on Cameroonian soil in 2019.

Similarly, the year is also crucial in preparing implementation of Cameroon's long term development vision through identification, preparation and prioritization of major second generation projects. It should be noted that second generation projects form part of implementation of phase II of the national strategy (2020-2027). Accordingly, technical departments are required to identify and propose appropriate major projects with obvious impacts on the living

conditions of the citizenry, while pursuing their maturation process so that they can be implemented from 2020.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Staff members,

To permit implementation of our objectives in fiscal 2018, the finance Law allocates to our Ministry a budget of CFAF 92 billion. In comparison with last year, our budget has dropped by about CFAF 50 billion in absolute value for reasons well known to all of us and which I will therefore not over-flog. However, rational use of the resources allocated to us will enable us achieve appreciable results.

Dear staff members,

Regardless of the shoestring budget, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development will in 2018 comply fully with the guidelines issued by the Head of State, His Excellency Paul BIYA, and contained in his traditional end-of-year message to the nation wherein he said : **“we will resolutely pursue implementation of our major projects, with special emphasis on road infrastructure”**. Accordingly, we shall have to:

- complete construction of the open country section of the Yaoundé-Nsimalen highway and start the urban section;
- complete road rehabilitation and construction works commenced in Yaoundé, Bamenda and Douala;
- complete the three-year emergency Plan for Accelerated Economic Growth (PLANUT) about which the President of the Republic underscored that **“significant progress has been made and efforts in this regard will be pursued”**;
- rehabilitate roads in about thirty secondary towns with 2018 Road Fund resources.

Besides, we shall lay emphasis on:

- completion of phase one of housing construction and habitability works within the framework of Government’s programme to construct 10,000 low-cost houses;
- effective start of improvement works on the Yaoundé municipal lake and renovation of the Mingoa valley;
- continuation of construction work on the 530 houses of the fiftieth anniversary housing complex in Douala and completion of work on 640 low-cost houses in Olembé-Yaoundé;

- start of preliminary studies on construction of 10,000 houses and related socio-cultural infrastructure in Mbankomo as well as an industrial base for the pre-fabrication of structural components of houses by the PIZZAROTTI Company;
- effective start of construction/rehabilitation of roads in Garoua, Bafoussam and Bertoua as part of C2D "Regional Headquarters" and the launching of studies for Bamenda and Garoua, as part of the second C2D "Regional Headquarters";
- Construction of bypass roads, access roads and parking lots for sport, health and hotel facilities in the cities that will host the 2019 AFCON;
- start of the development project for the promotion of inclusive and resilient cities in Ngaoundéré, Batouri, Douala, Yaoundé, Kousséri, Maroua and Kumba, with World Bank assistance;
- pursuit of construction of 39 km of storm drainage infrastructure in Douala;
 - completion of the 14 km long phase two of the Keep Yaoundé Clean Project (PADY 2);
- formulation of national Urban mobility strategy and strategy for preparation of sustainable urban mobility plans in Yaoundé and Douala, through "Mobilize Your City" initiative by AFD that promotes implementation of integrated urban transport system..

In addition, special emphasis will be laid on monitoring household waste collection and treatment. In this regard, I will travel to Douala tomorrow to ensure implementation of Government instructions on hygiene in the city. I wish to commend the company responsible for this important activity for the slight improvement observed in waste collection in Yaoundé, while urging the company to speed up implementation of the instructions I referred to before.

May I appeal to all to strive to inform, train, educate and sensitize citizens whose anti-social conduct contributes to the unhealthy sanitary conditions in our cities.

Dear aides, it is true that the task I am asking of you requires time often beyond statutory working hours. Additionally to material resources, it also requires a lot of mental and physical effort. I can assure you that Madam Secretary of State and I are ready to support you and duly consider every difficulty standing in your way.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Staff members,

Broaching issues of internal governance and human resources management, I received the report of sector meetings conducted by the Secretary General with the coordination services directly attached to the Secretariat General. During those meetings, financial, human and material resources needs were expressed. May I reassure you that as means permit, we shall spare no effort to improve the working conditions of all staff members. However, I wish to reiterate my instructions on due diligence in the management of resources placed at the disposal of Service Heads. **SHARING** must be the watchword for all service heads.

During the above-mentioned meetings, directives were issued with intent to galvanize the various services. Mr. Secretary General, I urge you to monitor implementation of the said directives.

Also, I recommend that you continue holding such meetings with all services of MINH DU. Such meetings are of crucial importance and afford the opportunity to identify obstacles to proper functioning of the services. They are also the choice forum to introduce new working methods. You will also need to ensure steady coordination of activities so that timely solutions may be found for difficulties that may arise in the implementation of projects.

In the same vein, I encourage all programme officers to organize management consultations to ensure better monitoring of activities retained under their respective programmes for fiscal 2018. Regarding the three-year period 2019-2021 ahead, the said officials, in cooperation with all stakeholders of their programmes, namely action officers, activity officers and management controllers, shall propose new orientations for their programmes, while identifying performance indicators and realistic annual and quarterly targets.

Regarding the new three-year period, emphasis is to be laid only on projects that will have a real impact on the living environment of the citizenry. Accordingly, I personally commit to chair strategic management meetings and to assess the progress of the different programmes.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Staff members,

I urge you to work with greater foresightedness, efficiency and republican loyalty to make the civil service grow from strength to strength at the service of sustainable economic growth. I also urge you to pursue actions that aim to reduce State spending. This can be done through rational use of water, electricity and the telephone. I avail myself of this opportunity to restate my commitment to afford you the multifaceted support you need to successfully accomplish your assigned missions. In return, I call on you to demonstrate greater determination, commitment and team spirit than ever before, for none of us can clinch success if we work in silos. Let us be the change that we look forward to in our country. Moreover, punctuality, hard work and respect for hierarchy, the culture of togetherness, faithfulness and trustworthiness to institutions must be an abiding concern for all of you.

Permit me to pay tribute to the companies and consultancies that have fittingly supported us through proper implementation of our portfolio infrastructure projects in spite of the hazards they had to navigate. I here extend the gratitude and encouragement of the Government to you in your journey, for the challenge ahead is huge and the best is yet to come.

To conclude, permit me, in response to the wishes you addressed to us through the Secretary General, to urge you to accept our best wishes for each and every one of you and your respective families as well as all those dear to you.

During this New Year, I encourage you to be architects of peace and to espouse the deep values of our dear and beautiful country as demanded of us by the champion of peace and social fellowship, His Excellency Paul BIYA.

May 2018 be for each one of us a year of robust health, success and prosperity on all fronts.

Long live Cameroon, one and indivisible, along with its illustrious leader, His Excellency Paul BIYA, precursor of the urban New Deal.

Thank you for your kind attention.