

The **Prime Minister, Head of Government, His Excellency Philemon YANG**, this Thursday 28 December 2017 chaired a Cabinet Meeting at 9 a.m. at the Prime Minister's Office.

Apart from his close aides, the Meeting was attended by the Vice Prime Minister, Ministers of State, Ministers, Ministers Delegate and Secretaries of State:

Three items featured on the agenda namely:

1. Statement by the Minister of Employment and Vocational Training on *Government strategy for the retraining of workers*;
2. Statement by the Minister of Forestry and Wildlife on *local processing of timber and non-timber resources*;
3. Information note by the Minister of Urban Development and Housing on *the main conclusions of the 2nd International conference on sustainable urbanization in Canada, China and Africa (ICCASU II)*.

After the introductory statement by the Head of Government, the Minister of Employment and Vocational Training started by saying that Government policy on retraining of workers is defined in the professional training strategy paper and is available in the 10-year Plan for Vocational Training Development for the period 2014-2024. For this strategy to be operational, Government has a network of high-level vocational training centres created with the assistance of technical and financial partners.

The following are among the mechanisms that underpin Government strategy for retraining, (i) *continuous and tailored training*, which offers salaried or self-employed workers the opportunity to acquire or improve their skills in the fourteen (14) existing professional branches in Cameroon; (ii) *apprenticeship training*, through the implementation of a pilot project for the gradual shift from traditional apprenticeship to renovated apprenticeship; (iii) *the validation of acquired experience* helping to recognize the professional aptitudes of any person who has gained experience through conventional or non-conventional channels. Looking at the constraints that hinder the implementation of ongoing initiatives in retraining, the Minister advocated, inter alia, the revision of the legislative and regulatory framework governing vocational training, as well as the adoption of a consensual partnership model with the productive sector.

Speaking after him, the Minister of Forestry and Wildlife first made an appraisal of the state of affairs of the local processing of timber and non-timber resources in Cameroon. It was revealed that out of the 160 timber processing units operating nationwide, 124 are limited to first phase processing, 25 go to the second phase processing and 11 do third phase processing, which provides the market with finished and high added value products. As for non-timber forest resources, their processing remains artisanal and is centred on semi-finished products. This situation is mainly due to equipment deficit of the existing processing units and insufficient training in woodwork trades.

