

REPUBLIQUE DU CAMEROUN
Paix-Travail-Patrie

SERVICES DU PREMIER MINISTRE

SECRETARIAT GENERAL

REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON
Peace-Work-Fatherland

PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

SECRETARIAT GENERAL

**PRESS RELEASE FOLLOWING THE CABINET MEETING
OF THURSDAY, 31 OCTOBER 2019**

Yaounde, 31 October 2019

The Prime Minister, Head of Government, His Excellency Joseph DION NGUTE, today Thursday 31 October 2019 as from 10:00 a.m. chaired the Cabinet Meeting for the current month in the Prime Minister's Office, which was attended by Ministers of State, Ministers, Ministers-Delegate and Secretaries of State.

The following items featured on the Cabinet Meeting agenda:

1. *Assessment and prospects of the cocoa-coffee sub-sector, presented by the Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development;*
2. *Strategy for building a national consciousness through the media, presented by the Minister for Communication;*
3. *The reports of the Minister for Post and Telecommunications and the Minister for Water Resources and Power on the implementation of instructions given during the Cabinet Meeting of 25 April 2019.*

The Prime Minister opened proceedings by asking Members of Government to observe a minute of silence in remembrance of the victims of the landslide that occurred in Bafoussam on the night of 28 October 2019. He then gave the floor to the Minister for Territorial Administration for his report on the inter-ministerial mission he led to the disaster site on 30 October 2019. He revealed that the torrential rainfall of the previous day was the cause of the landslide that led to the destruction of several houses built in the zone where construction is forbidden. Provisional reports mention 43 deaths and 11 survivors who are receiving treatment in local health facilities. The Minister for Territorial Administration pointed out that the Head of State granted CFAF 200,000,000 as financial assistance to affected families and for the resettlement of affected persons. The Head of Government instructed that the urgent technical, safety, health and environmental measures recommended should be immediately implemented by the competent Government departments for an efficient management of this disaster.

Taking the floor on the first agenda item, the Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development began by presenting an assessment of the cocoa/coffee sub-sector. In that regard, he indicated that the current growth of cocoa production is moderate, with 365,000 tons marketed as on 15 July 2019 for the 2018/2019 agriculture season; this corresponds to a 3.53% increase compared to the 2017/2018 season. In the same period, the local cocoa-processing capacity rose by 9.5%, thanks to the commissioning of new industrial units in Kribi and Kekem.

Estimates for Robusta and Arabica coffee production for the 2018/2019 season stand at 25,000 tonnes for both varieties, far below the 132,000 tonnes registered in 1986. However, prospects for local processing and consumption of coffee remain encouraging, thanks to the promotional actions of sector developers. Furthermore, to boost the performance of the cocoa/coffee sub-sector, Government has been implementing a Recovery and Development Plan since 2015 targeting an increase in the production of cocoa to 600,000 tonnes, robusta coffee to 125,000 tonnes and arabica coffee to 35,000 tonnes by 2020. The plan places emphasis on research as well as on the development of activities geared towards increasing productivity by supporting fertilization, using high-yield plant materials and expanding the cultivated area.

After mentioning different factors that constrain the development of the sub-sector, the Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development stressed that prospects in the cocoa/coffee subsector are bright, judging from forecasts of cocoa price trends on the world market.

Lastly, he outlined four priority actions to be implemented in order to restore the fortunes of the subsector, namely intensify variety research, train farmers in agricultural good practices, increase plantation sizes and create new plantations.

Speaking in turn, the Minister for Communication began by pointing out that the promotion of national consciousness through the media consists in producing and disseminating media content that leads citizens to know, love and defend their Nation under all circumstances, by nurturing mutual bonds of solidarity and a strong feeling of belonging to the same one and indivisible Nation. The media arsenal to be deployed to reach the target audience to be conscientized requires the mobilization of 600 existing print media outfits in Cameroon, in addition to some thirty television stations and about a dozen cybernetic media. The Minister particularly lauded the efforts made by some public and private media organs to promote values conducive to the development of the national consciousness, but also deplored the fact that a good number of national press organs, that are often manipulated, spread hate speech with tribalistic undertones and call for sedition and hostility towards the motherland and the republican institutions.

Continuing his statement, the Minister for Communication cited two main difficulties that impede the development of national consciousness via the media: (i) no codification of the operating rules of national media whose prescriptions do not include the requirement to promote the national consciousness; and (ii) the inadequacy of financial resources to organize mass communication campaigns or invest in social media through intensive digital communication actions on the forging of the national consciousness.

In terms of prospects, the Minister for Communication recommended that conditions for deploying the media should be strengthened in order to rally them behind the major cause of forging a national consciousness through the public and private media.

After the discussions that followed these statements, the Cabinet Meeting listened to the reports of the Minister for Post and Telecommunication and the Minister for Water Resources and Power on the implementation of instructions given to them during the Cabinet Meeting of 25 April 2019, on the strategy for reducing the costs of electronic communication and of such factors of production as water, electricity and gas, respectively.

At the end of the proceedings, the Head of Government asked the Minister in charge of Agriculture to prepare the multi-year budgeting of resources necessary for improving the yields of cocoa and coffee plantations, procure planting material and train farmers on agricultural good practices. He asked the Minister for Communication to institutionalize contract specifications in media operational procedures and incorporate therein obligations regarding the production and dissemination of content that guarantees the promotion of national consciousness. Lastly, the Prime Minister applauded the progress made in carrying out instructions given to the Minister of Post and Telecommunication and the Minister for Water Resources and Power, before enjoining them to finalize ongoing actions by end-2019.

The Meeting was adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

Yaounde, **31 OCT 2019**

FOUDA Seraphin Magloire,
Secretary General of the
Prime Minister's Office

