

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

The **Prime Minister, Head of Government, H.E. Joseph DION NGUTE**, this Thursday, 20 August 2020, presided over the weekly meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Committee in charge of evaluating and monitoring the implementation of Government's response strategy against the COVID-19 pandemic in Cameroon.

Three items featured on the agenda, namely:

1. the situation of the COVID-19 pandemic in Cameroon;
2. the progress report on the work of the public-private sector platform in charge of proposing measures to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 health crisis;
3. the contribution of craftsmen to the local production of masks.

According to the report of the Minister of Public Health, out of the **18,662** cases recorded to date in Cameroon, the number of patients cured is **17,065** against **408** deaths. The cure rate has thus risen from **91.2%** last week to **91.4%**, while the case-fatality rate remains at **2.1%**. Overall, the number of people who test positive for COVID-19 is significantly lower than the number of tests carried out, hence the need to strengthen the implementation of the ongoing response strategy.

Therefore, emphasis will be laid on intensifying mass screening, through the conduct of mobile caravans and the establishment of sampling units within administrations, strengthening the operational capacities of health districts in the search for, and monitoring of infected persons, and greater involvement of Mayors and religious leaders in raising awareness among the population on compliance with safety measures.

With regard to measures to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 health crisis, the Minister of Finance said that they fall in two categories: general measures applicable to all companies and specific measures per sector of activity.

With regard to general measures, the proposed actions currently being finalised mainly concern the examination of various tax concerns and support for the cash flow of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises. As for the specific provisions relating to the situation of the production sectors, incentives have already been adopted for the oleaginous and cosmetics sectors. They will be extended to the other affected sectors.

With regard to the contribution of craftsmen to the local manufacture of masks, the Minister in charge of Handicrafts indicated that the actions carried out made it possible to identify the craftsmen likely to produce the masks, to determine their daily production capacities, to respect the technical specificities of the Cameroonian standard, but above all to shed light on their needs in terms of inputs and factors of production.

To date, some **2,680,000** masks have already been produced by local craftsmen and additional stocks will be placed on the market in the coming weeks, thanks to the allocation from the Special National Solidarity Fund for the fight against COVID-19 and its economic and social impact.

At the end of the discussions, the Head of Government instructed:

- the **Minister of Public Health**, to stay the course towards achieving the main objectives defined in the response strategy, namely to reduce community transmission of the virus and capacity building for screening, monitoring and treatment of patients with COVID-19;
- the **Minister of Finance** to accelerate the activities of the working platform with the private sector, so that the implementation of the resulting measures will contribute to a vigorous and rapid recovery of economic activities in Cameroon;
- the **Minister of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises, Social Economy and Handicrafts**, to continue the supervision and support of local craftsmen in the process of manufacturing masks, encouraging them to conform their products to the standards set by ANOR.

With regard to the wearing of masks in public spaces, the Prime Minister reiterated his earlier instructions to the Ministers concerned, the Delegate General for National Security and the Secretary of State in charge of the National Gendarmerie, urging them to give priority to an educational and non-repressive approach, by encouraging the population to systematically wear a mask whenever they are in a space open to the public, in order to limit the spread of COVID-19.

Lastly, the Prime Minister instructed all ministers to give preference to the local industry in the acquisition of masks and hand sanitizers, while avoiding ordering locally manufactured products from abroad. The Head of Government also instructed them to encourage their staff to undergo screening and to designate focal points to facilitate the conduct of screening operations within the public administration.-

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