

PRESS RELEASE FOLLOWING CABINET MEETING OF WEDNESDAY 29 JULY 2020

The Prime Minister, Head of Government, **His Excellency Joseph DION NGUTE**, today Wednesday 29 July 2020 at 10 a.m. through video conference, chaired a Cabinet Meeting devoted to the review of motorway projects, attended by Ministers of State, Ministers, Ministers-Delegate and Secretaries of State.

During this Meeting, the Minister of Public Works and the Minister of Housing and Urban Development respectively presented the current situation, challenges and outlook of the Yaounde-Douala and Kribi-Edea motorway construction projects, and the Yaounde-Nsimalen motorway.

The Minister of Public Health also presented the weekly update on the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic in Cameroon.

Taking the floor following the Prime Minister's introductory statement, the Minister of Public Works indicated that the motorway programme initiated by the President of the Republic provides for the medium and long term construction of the Yaounde-Douala motorways (196 km), Edéa-Kribi-Lolabe (130 km), Bafoussam-Bamenda (116 km), the Yaoundé/Douala-Bafoussam intersection (250 km) and Yaoundé-Ngaoundéré-Garoua-Maroua-Kousseri-Ndjamena (about 1500 km). The first phase of this vast programme was launched in 2014, with the start of construction work on the Yaoundé-Douala and Edéa-Kribi-Lolabe motorways.

With regard to the Yaoundé-Douala motorway, work on the 60-km long Yaoundé-Bibodi section has been completed by over 40 km, with 20 km of recovery lanes. Signalling and slope protection remain to be completed. The physical execution rate is 91% and the completion date for this section is set for 31 December 2020. In addition, several social collective facilities such as boreholes and classrooms have been built, as part of the environmental and social management plan of the project.

For the second section, Bibodi-Douala which is 136 km long, the summary studies were validated on 14 November 2019 and the Public-Private Partnership procedure was launched. The signature of the related contract is envisaged for 30 March 2021, with a view to starting the works. The main challenges relate to the release of rights of way, the payment of compensation and the mobilization of additional funding.

With regard to the Edéa-Kribi-Lolabe motorway, the Minister of Public Works said that this project is part of the improvement of the competitiveness and attractiveness of the Kribi Port Authority. The works on the Kribi-Lolabe section, 38.5 km long, are 88.14% completed. Two major challenges are hindering the execution of the works, namely the payment of residual compensation and settlement for the works already executed.

Negotiations are underway to structure a public-private partnership contract with the project's technical and financial partners.

For the Edéa-Kribi section, 92 km long, the notice of expression of interest was launched on 4 March 2020 for the selection of companies responsible for carrying out the work. The bids submitted on 30 June 2020 will be examined by the dedicated Special Commission which is currently being set up.

Speaking after this, the Minister of Housing and Urban Development presented the level of completion of the Yaounde-Nsimalen motorway, a 23.3 km linear motorway, divided into two sections. On the "open country" section, 11.3 km long, the work progress rate is 90%. Following the release of the rights-of-way, the pace of work accelerated in preparation for the opening of this section to traffic during the CHAN 2021 and AFCON 2022 competitions.

For the 12 km urban section, studies have already been carried out and contracts awarded to three groups of companies. The Government has taken steps to mobilize the necessary funding for the work on this section.

Finally, the Meeting followed the report of the Minister of Public Health on the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic in Cameroon. He indicated that to date, 17,255 confirmed cases have been recorded, 15,320 patients have been cured and 387 deaths have been recorded. The cure rate stands at 88.78% for a case-fatality rate of 2.2%. Under the current voluntary screening campaign, 149,000 tests have already been conducted and the rapid treatment of patients makes it possible to limit community transmission of the virus.

At the end of the discussions that followed these presentations, the Prime Minister instructed the Minister of Public Works, in conjunction with the Minister of Land Tenure and the competent administrative authorities, to begin the process of releasing rights of way on the sections chosen for the construction of the motorway. He instructed the Minister of Economy and the Minister of Finance to set up, within the framework of the preparation of the Finance Law for the 2021 financial year, substantial budgetary provisions for the settlement and compensation relating to the motorway projects in progress.

In miscellaneous, the Minister of Housing and Urban Development announced the imminent start of development work on the Yaounde municipal lake. The Minister of External Relations, for his part, gave an update on the repatriation process of Cameroonians stranded abroad.

The Meeting was adjourned at 12:45 p.m.-

Yaounde, the 12 9 JULIL 2020

