

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 CABINET MEETING
OF WEDNESDAY 31 MARCH 2021**

Yaounde, 31 March 2021

The Prime Minister, Head of Government, His Excellency Joseph DION NGUTE, today Wednesday, 31 March 2021, from 10 a.m., chaired a Cabinet meeting attended by Ministers of State, Ministers, Ministers Delegate and Secretaries of State.

Three items featured on the agenda, namely:

1. *Statement on strategies for developing applied scientific research in Cameroon in response to the emergence of epidemics and endemics;*
2. *Statement on the mechanisms for strengthening vocational training in Cameroon with a view to promoting self-employment;*
3. *Report on the situation of the COVID-19 pandemic in Cameroon.*

At the end of the opening statement of the Head of Government, the Minister of Scientific Research and Innovation said that several structures are involved in applied scientific research in Cameroon. Specifically, the Institute of Medical Research and Medicinal Plant Study (IMPM) plays a key role in medical research. The institute has already made a name for itself by producing drugs for common infectious diseases and epidemics, including HIV-AIDS, typhoid fever and more recently COVID-19. In addition, the Centre for Research on Emerging and Re-emerging Diseases (CREMER) is involved in the field of epidemiological surveillance and detection of emerging diseases.

Specifically, the strategies for strengthening applied research in Cameroon focus on intensifying partnerships with the various actors involved, supporting the galenic formulation of medicinal plants and conducting analyses to determine the properties of traditional pharmacopoeia products. In terms of perspectives, the Minister of Scientific Research intends to (i) create incubators in research institutes, (ii) enhance the value of traditional medicine with a view to strengthening the national health system and (iii) create collaboration platforms with public and private actors involved in scientific research, in order to pool scientific and infrastructural capacities.

The Meeting then followed the presentation by the Minister for Employment and Vocational Training, who began by emphasising the key role of vocational training in reducing youth unemployment and promoting self-employment. He then insisted on the need to deconstruct stereotypes about vocational training, by raising awareness.

In order to strengthen the interest of young job seekers in vocational training, the mechanism deployed by the Minister of Employment aims to ensure a match between the needs of the labour market and the training offered in the training centres. This mechanism is based on three main thrusts, namely (i) collaboration with employers and business leaders to offer training adapted to their needs and ensure opportunities for learners, (ii) constructing and making new vocational training centres operational and (iii) improving the cost of training in public centres.

Regarding the situation of the coronavirus pandemic in Cameroon, the Minister of Public Health indicated that there have been more contaminations over the last few days, with 5,556 new cases recorded. The areas with the highest contamination rate are the Littoral, Centre, West and East Regions. However, there has been a slight decrease in the pressure on health facilities, a reduction in severe cases and

an increase in the healing rate.

In order to consolidate these results, the Minister of Public Health insisted on the importance of observing safety measures, the need to multiply screening and to systematically refer all sick people to approved care centres. Moreover, the response strategy currently being implemented is set to enter a more offensive phase with the establishment of additional centres for the care of COVID-19 patients and the forthcoming introduction of voluntary vaccination.

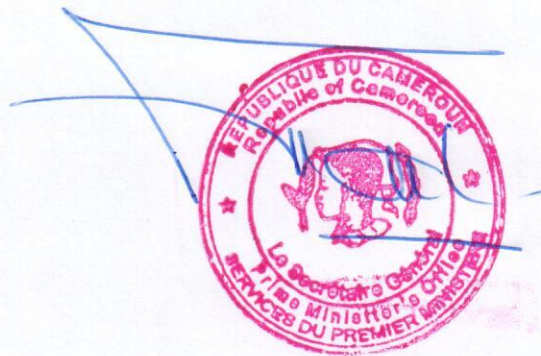
At the end of the discussion following these statements, the Prime Minister prescribed the elaboration of a perennial mechanism for financing the development of applied scientific research, based on the mobilisation of private capital, in addition to the public funds already allocated to this important activity. Regarding the strengthening of vocational training, the Head of Government instructed the Minister of Employment to examine the possibility of reducing the cost of training in public centres and to complete the implementation of projects for the construction of vocational training centres.

Concerning the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, the Prime Minister instructed the Minister of Public Health to continue with massive screening operations, with a view to detecting and treating cases early. Finally, the Head of Government instructed the Ministers of the education sector to ensure the disinfection of schools and the renewal of kits to fight against COVID-19, before the resumption of classes for the third term.

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

Yaounde, the _____

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