

REPUBLIQUE DU CAMEROUN
PAIX – TRAVAIL – PATRIE

**MINISTERE DE L’HABITAT ET DU
DEVELOPPEMENT URBAIN**

REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON
PEACE – WORK - FATHERLAND

**MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND
URBAN DEVELOPMENT**

**STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF HOUSING AND
URBAN DEVELOPMENT
HER EXCELLENCY**

**Mrs CELESTINE KETCHA EPOUSE COURTES
ON THE OCCASION OF THE 2019 NEW YEAR WISHES
PRESENTATION CEREMONY**

Yaounde, 25 January 2019.

**Madam Secretary of State
Your Excellencies Ambassadors,
Mr. Secretary General,
Mr. Board Chair of SIC;
General Managers,
Government Delegates,
Lord and Lady mayors,
Presidents of Professional Orders,
Ladies and Gentlemen, dear Aides;
Distinguished guests,**

It is a great pleasure for me to be in your midst today, at this traditional and convivial new year wishes presentation ceremony. Permit me first to warmly welcome each and every one of you and to thank you for your massive presence in this ceremony which is a token of the great interest you grant to actions undertaken in the housing and urban development sub-sector.

I would like, on the onset and solemnly, to thank the Head of State His Excellency PAUL BIYA, who wished that I should accompany him in this seven-year term of « Great Opportunities » by appointing me Minister of Housing and Urban Development. This mark of confidence honors me in various respects and compels me to stand up to the trust bestowed on me.

Permit me also to commend the balanceshit drafted by the Secretary General and to thank him for the wishes of happiness and prosperity he just extended, on behalf of the MINH DU's staff, to Madam Secretary of State and me. Mr Secretary General, your words honor us and are the symbol of a franc and loyal collaboration.

Lastly, my thanks go to all of you here present who have momentarily abandoned your activities to add, by your presence, more glamour to this ceremony.

I would like in return, on behalf of Madam Secretary of State and on my own behalf, to extend to you the most sincere wishes of happiness, health, long life, peace and most especially of prosperity.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,
Dear Aides,**

On this solemn circumstance, the New Year wishes presentation ceremony represents for us a very important moment to assess the progress made but most importantly to lay the foundation of a much more successful year for the well being of our fellow citizens, the main beneficiaries of our actions.

Thus, the year 2019 now beginning is particular because it marks the end of a period dedicated to the implementation of the Growth and Employment Strategy Paper (GESP), with as consequence, the necessity to complete first generation major projects. During this same year, focus will be on the drafting of the post GESP document and the maturation of second generation Major Projects.

Concerning this issue, it worth noting that the new city program adopted during the UN Conference for Housing and Sustainable Urban Development HABITAT III in Quito/Ecuador on 20th October 2016 offers a common vision for a better and sustainable world; a world in which people can benefit from the various rights and equally benefit from opportunities afforded by the city.

This new program introduces a change of paradigm deriving from the emergence of a cities' science. It unveils the acknowledgement of the correlation between proper urbanization and development. It highlights the interaction between smooth urbanization and job creation, between quality life and livelihood opportunities, principles that should be mainstreamed into every urban renewal policy and strategy.

I would like to cease this opportunity to congratulate and encourage the team working in collaboration with the Secretary General on the drafting of the National Development Strategy for the second phase of Vision 2035. In fact, from the proceedings reported to me, it appears that the many commitments signed by Cameroon in favor of resilient, competitive and attractive cities are taken into account in the preparation of operational programs that we will implement in 2020.

This year mainly represents the kick-off of implementation of a new seven-year term of office: « **the Great Opportunities** ». Great opportunities for all urban populations that legitimately long for well-being. Yes ! It is this social project of the Head of State, His Excellency Paul BIYA that will guide our action throughout this New Year. In this vein, I would like to share with you, dear aides, some excerpts of the messages delivered by the Head of State these last months.

On the housing component,

First, the inaugural speech on 6 November 2018 and I quote, “... **I will persist in putting all my efforts to showcase a low-cost housing policy worthy of the name...**” end of quotes.

Then, on 31st December, during his New Year wishes to the nation, and I quote “... **We will continue to solve the nagging problem of low-cost housing ...**”

These statements by the Head of State concern the MINHDU and call for concrete solutions from us.

In order to achieve this, I encourage concerned aides to “**produce results**” by portraying innovation, commitment and effectiveness.

The current context requires particular measures, namely: identification of actions that contribute to speeding-up the process to make our country an emergent country; in this regard, the **President of the Republic**, in his inaugural speech declared, « **The emergence goal should be made a national cause which mobilizes all our citizens so as to make Cameroon a modern and socially advanced country** ». The aim will be to do everything possible to complete, within the time frame, projects under execution, and mostly to ensure, for upcoming years, the identification of projects with a reel impact on improving the living conditions of the population than those with impact on economic growth. For this reason, believing in the idea according to which every effort deserves to be acknowledged, we are going to reward the best collaborators of the Minister, and the best regional and divisional delegates every year.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,
Dear aides,**

In view of the generalized urban expansion, the city is growing and gaining new spaces; basic social

infrastructure needs are increasingly felt; the seriousness of the situation is shown through the rise in urban sprawling which requires a strong action by mayors to ensure a controlled use of spaces. I would like to recall that the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development has lent support to about a hundred councils for the preparation of their urban planning documents; this action will be pursued in upcoming years to permit all our country's councils to be planned.

However, the expected result cannot be achieved without everybody's mobilization for compliance with the provisions of such documents and especially if our mayors do not play their role.

As concerns actions to be undertaken in the 2019, I urge you to leave no stone unturned to ensure completion of major housing unit, road and sanitation infrastructure construction projects initiated by our Ministry. They are namely:

- The three-year Emergency Plan to speed-up Economic Growth (PLANUT); in its housing and road network components;
- The project for urgent rehabilitation of urban roads across the national territory under the instructions of the Head of State;
- Drainage infrastructure construction in Yaoundé and Douala to improve urban sanitation.

This measure also concerns road projects launched as part of the preparation of AFCON whose projects should be completed latest in March this year. I avail myself of this

opportunity to commend the completion pace of the various projects.

Ladies, Gentlemen

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, in view of its action plan for the fiscal year now beginning, will carry out major activities based on specific objectives.

Therefore, to increase **decent housing units supply**, the following operations will be undertaken:

- Completion of construction of 1675 housing units entrusted to national **SMEs** ;
- Completion of construction of 700 housing units in regions' headquarters excluding Douala, Ebolowa and Yaoundé as part of The three-year Emergency Plan to speed-up Economic Growth (PLANUT);
- Effective kick-start of construction of 1000 housing units of the pilot phase of a total of 10 000 housing units and related socio-cultural equipment, as well as an industrial base for prefabrication of structural construction elements with support of the Italian firm PIZZAROTI.
- Effective start of construction of 120 low-cost housing units with local material in Yaoundé/Olembé;
- Speeding up of the construction of the first phase of La Cité des Cinquantenaires in Douala and the effective start of the one in Yaoundé.
- Completion of negotiations with the Chinese company (Société Nationale SNC-SHENYANG) for an additional 3,200 low-cost housing units in Yaoundé.

As concerns the improvement of the urban environment, particular emphasis will be laid in 2019 on:

- Completion of construction of rain drainage infrastructure in Douala of a 39 km linear ;
- Completion of the second phase of the PADY 2 of a 14 km linear ;
- Start of construction of a water treatment plant in Mendong/Yaoundé ;
- Construction of 670 street lighting points in six cities of Cameroon;

Concerning urban transport infrastructure development, the focus will be on completion of road projects started in previous years, namely:

- Construction of the Yaoundé-Nsimalen highway county section ;
- Rehabilitation and construction of access roads to the stadium and hospital and hotel facilities in Douala, Limbé, Buea, Bafoussam, Garoua, Mbouda and Bandjoun;
- Urgent rehabilitation of urban roads across the territory as instructed by the Head of State H.E.Mr Paul Biya ;
- The PLANUT project in its road network component.

Still as concerns the road network, the following should be noted:

- Start of construction of the urban section intersection road Yaoundé-Nsimalen-carrefour Palais des Sports simplified flyover Derrière Combatant ;

- Pursuit of road and drainage works in the Bafoussam, Bertoua, Garoua as part of the C2D urban « Regional Headquarters 1 » ;
- Completion of urban service infrastructure and various equipment projects in Bamenda and Maroua as part of the C2D urban « Regional Headquarters 2».

Ladies and Gentlemen
Dear aides,

As you can notice, the challenges we are called upon to face are numerous. This means that we should have an ambitious intervention program to stand up to them. As for the 2019 plan of action whose outlines I have just exposed to you, it can be effectively executed only if we have human resources available and mobilized around the values that characterize the public service. Therefore, I invite you, more than ever before, to be more determined and committed to work as a team. In the area of discipline, I urge you to further develop punctuality, attendance at work, respect of the hierarchy and selflessness so that the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development should gain influence and bring a favorable answer to the expectations of populations as well as those of the high hierarchy. For my part, I can assure you that you will always get from me and Madam Secretary of State all the attention you need.

In response to the request made by the Secretary General, spokesperson of the MINHDU's staff, relating to improved working conditions of the entire staff, I wish to

say that the commitment I urge to take is actually demanding both on the physical and the intellectual fronts. And I promise to do my level best depending on the resources available, to make sure that each and every staff member, I repeat each and every staff member, from the cleaner to the highest officer, have their working conditions improved substantially.

In return to the wishes formulated by Mr. Secretary General, I wish you all as well as your respective families, a happy new year of peace, health and prosperity and most especially on the professional plan, a year of commitment, and of success so that our Ministry can achieve the expected objectives.

Happy New Year 2019!!!!!!!!!!!!

I thank you for your very kind attention.