

**HEAD OF STATE'S 2025 NEW YEAR
MESSAGE TO THE NATION**

www.prc.cm

Yaounde, 31 December 2024

Fellow Cameroonians,
My Dear Compatriots,

A few years ago, I stated that the current seven-year term would be decisive, insofar as it would enable our country to resolutely continue its march towards emergence.

I did specify that this objective should be made a veritable "national cause", especially through our collective commitment to restoring security, strengthening our economic growth and significantly improving the living conditions of Cameroonians.

In hindsight, the years that have gone by since then, show that great strides have been made in each of these areas.

Security, which is a prerequisite for economic and social progress, has been and remains our core priority. ♦

Thanks to the combined action of our defence and police forces, the administrative authorities and the populace, our country has remained stable, despite a particularly troubled global context.

Granted, some areas of our country continue to face cowardly attacks from terrorist groups and serious crime. However, I can assure you that all is being done to bring lasting peace across our territory.

Crime in our urban centres and rural areas is being energetically combated by the forces of law and order, who I earnestly encourage.

I am particularly pleased with the progress achieved in combating the Boko Haram terrorist group. The operations carried out in recent years by our armed forces in the Far-North Region have severely curbed the destructive capacity of these terrorists, who are now reduced to attacking only innocent civilians.

I have also noted that the reconstruction of the North-West and South-West Regions is progressing, despite the atrocities being committed by some armed gangs, which continue to target mainly the civilian population.

It can never be overemphasized that the separatist cause championed by these purportedly enlightened beings is doomed to failure.

Cameroon will remain one and indivisible. Such is the wish of the overwhelming majority of our compatriots. This is the very essence of the mandate given to me. And I will never fail to deliver on it.

My Dear Compatriots,

You know my attachment to National Unity, Progress and Peace. You are witnesses to the actions the Government has been taking for years, under my leadership, to bring an end to this security crisis that is undermining the development of these regions and plunging many families into mourning.

I take this opportunity to remind the members of these armed bands that the Nation is still reaching out to them.

I urge them, once again, to take up the offer of peace that has been made to them and to lay down their weapons. Hundreds of their comrades have already joined the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Centres, and have been trained in different trades, for their easy social integration. The fate of the diehard warmongers is unenviable. They will be relentlessly tracked down and will inevitably answer for their crimes.

My Dear Compatriots,

The consolidation of our country's economic growth is now real. Cameroon is regularly praised by the relevant financial bodies for its resilience, despite a particularly difficult international context.

Indeed, in recent years, we have had our share of exogenous shocks.

The war in Eastern Europe, the Middle East conflicts, the gloomy capital and commodity markets, climate disruptions, inflationary pressures and oil price fluctuations have slowed our growth prospects.

Despite this particularly challenging global context, Cameroon's economy witnessed renewed activity, with an estimated growth rate of 3.8% in 2024, which is projected to reach 4.1% in 2025.

Measures taken to limit speculative behaviour and increase the supply of essential goods have helped to contain inflation at 5% this year, down from 7.4% in 2023.

This trend is expected to continue in 2025, to stand at 4%.

To reduce our trade balance deficit and ensure food sovereignty, the integrated agro-pastoral and fisheries import-substitution plan, which I announced last year, is starting to yield tangible outcomes.

During this year, 452 tonnes of seeds and 12 800 tonnes of flour were produced. Also, going forward, our list of exported products includes industrial products, notably aluminium.

This trend should accelerate in 2025, thanks to the reform of the National Investment Corporation, making this body a veritable strategic lever for promoting productive investments in Cameroon.

Furthermore, Government has kept up efforts to rehabilitate and structurally transform our economy, by progressively operationalizing the economic zones. Several initiatives have been undertaken in this regard, including the Kribi Port Authority's integrated industrial area, dedicated to the processing of commodities such as cocoa, coffee and rubber.

With regard to cocoa, in particular, the qualitative excellence promotion policy implemented in recent years has resulted in exceptional price levels, benefiting producers.

Similarly, two economic zones specializing in wood processing are being set up in Edea and Bertoua. Such is also the case of the agro-industrial technology hub at Ouassa-Babouté via Nkoteng, which will be devoted to the production and processing of cereals, tubers, milk and its byproducts.

The industrialization of our country is taking shape by the day. The opening of the largest tile production plant in Central Africa in the locality of Bipaga, in Kribi, with the creation of over 2 500 direct jobs, is further proof of such industrialization.

The dynamism of the industrial sector is also evidenced by the commissioning of a sixth cement plant in Cameroon, resulting in lower cement prices.

There is no doubt that this booming sector forms the cornerstone of our country's legitimate aspiration to economic emergence.

There are also bright prospects for developing the rich potential of our mining sector.

The mining of the Kribi-Lobe, Bipindi-Grand Zambi and Mbalam-Nabeba iron deposits is imminent. The same holds for the Minim-Martap bauxite, whose mining convention was signed last July.

I am also convinced that a mastery of the marketing channels of our minerals will increase the volume of financial resources required to implement our development projects.

My Dear Compatriots,

My core concern since acceding to the helm of State has always been to improve the living conditions of Cameroonians.

Under my leadership, substantial efforts have been made by public authorities to ensure that our people have satisfactory access to basic social services.

The current high population growth of our country has definitely reduced the impact of these efforts, due to ever-increasing demand.

Accordingly, under my authority, Government has always paid special attention to implementing projects that contribute towards making the daily lives of every citizen better.

Such is notably the case for electric power supply, whose importance for the development of economic activities and the lives of households, is beyond question.

Power supply has improved significantly since the completion of the Lom Pangar dam-toe plant and the commissioning of the Nachtigal dam this year.

The volume of investment in this strategic sector is bound to increase as several hydroelectric and photovoltaic projects come to maturation.

With regard to the rural areas in particular, Phase IV of the Project to Electrify One Thousand Localities with Solar Energy will continue. The same holds for the construction of 360 solar power plants in administrative units that are yet to be electrified.

The completion of these projects and the interconnection of the southern and northern grids will ultimately reduce load shedding and narrow the energy gap between the southern and northern regions of our country.

Drinking water supply is another major challenge that the government has taken up in recent years, with commendable determination. The commissioning of the Drinking Water Supply Project for the City of Yaounde has significantly improved coverage in this urban centre.

To further improve access, a campaign to connect eight thousand households to the drinking water network has been initiated in this city.

In the city of Douala, the rehabilitation and extension of the Japoma Waterworks is ongoing, while the engineering studies for the drinking water supply megaproject in this city have been completed.

The upgrading of drinking water production facilities is ongoing in many secondary towns. Our ambition is to provide quality water in each of our localities, to meet the expectations of our fellow citizens.

At the same time, we will keep up our efforts to enhance healthcare delivery by upgrading hospital technical facilities and expanding the health map. The recently inaugurated Ngaoundere and Bertoua regional hospitals are part of such efforts.

To improve this sector's performance, I have ordered the recruitment of 9 944 health workers over the next five years. This special recruitment initiative will not only help to reduce unemployment among young health sector graduates, but also significantly improve patient care.

Also, dialogue between the Government and trade unions is ongoing, in a bid to address the aspirations and concerns of teachers.

My Dear Compatriots,

Let me say a word about the road network.

I am aware of your frustration about the deterioration of our urban and interurban roads.

As you know, this situation significantly impacts economic activities and is often a major cause of traffic accidents.

I can assure you that the current state of our road network does not reflect the efforts and sacrifices being made for its rehabilitation

and expansion. The challenges in this sector are well known. Foremost among them is the availability of funding, followed by the impact of rainfall. I do not lose sight of governance issues, which undoubtedly call for firm and urgent measures. I will ensure that these issues are tackled.

To address this situation, I have instructed the reorganization of the Road Fund, with a view to enhancing its capacity to mobilize the funding required for road construction, rehabilitation and maintenance projects.

Despite the weaknesses I have outlined, we must not overlook the significant efforts made in this sector.

During the year drawing to an end, 446 kilometres of roads were paved nationwide, and 228 kilometres were rehabilitated.

Other road rehabilitation projects will be launched in 2025, including the Bekoko-Limbe-Idenau and the Mutengene-Buea sections.

Following extensive negotiations with donors, several long-anticipated road projects are now set to begin. These include the Ngaoundere-Garoua, the Ebolowa-Akom II-Kribi, and the Mora-Kousseri roads. Meanwhile, the construction of the urban section of the Yaounde-Nsimalen motorway has started, and Phase 2 of the Yaounde-Douala motorway is making progress.

Fellow Cameroonians,
My Dear Compatriots,

The implementation of the projects I have just mentioned, and many others, require substantial financial resources. The said resources, as we are all aware, are becoming increasingly scarce and challenging to mobilize due to the prevailing global situation and the constraints inherent in our economy.

To achieve our set development goals, we must improve governance across all sectors of activity.

The Extraordinary Summit of CEMAC Member States, recently hosted by our country, underscored the pressing need to implement the requisite structural reforms for fiscal consolidation within our sub-region. As in the past, Cameroon will spare no effort to achieve this objective.

Improving governance also means stepping up the fight against corruption and misappropriation of public funds. This ensures legal protection for private investment and land tenure security, where abuses have been noted.

Let me assure you of one thing: appropriate sanctions will be meted out on those found guilty of such offences.

Fellow Cameroonians,

A number of our compatriots lost their lives this year as a result of accidents, some of which could have been avoided. These include road accidents as well as the collapse of buildings constructed in violation of the regulations in force.

The measures taken by public authorities to reduce the risk of accidents will be continued and intensified.

Unfortunately, we also recorded many victims of natural disaster. The tragedy of the Dschang cliff and the floods in the Far-North Region are proof of the consequences of our increasing exposure to climate change.

While it is true that such floods are, for the most part, difficult to predict, we must step up our efforts to prevent or reduce the ensuing damage.

To this end, I have clearly directed the Government to implement a specific plan to construct and rehabilitate critical flood protection infrastructure in this Region.

My Dear Compatriots,

The year 2025 will usher in a new season of elections. According to the electoral calendar, the presidential and regional elections will be held this year.

As in the past, these events will represent major milestones in the life of our nation. Let us take this opportunity to further strengthen our democracy.

I call on all stakeholders to show proof of maturity and responsibility and to ensure that peace and stability prevail before, during and after these elections.

I am fully aware that some of our compatriots continue to face challenges in enrolling on the electoral register due to lack of national identity cards.

Many of them are burdened by issues of dual identity, a predicament for which they themselves are responsible.

To address this situation speedily, I have ordered that the requisite measures should be taken.

Fellow Cameroonians,

The coming year 2025 promises to be replete with challenges. However, there is not a shadow of a doubt in my mind that by remaining as united and cohesive as always, we will meet them.

Yes, My Dear Compatriots, we will, as in the past, together, turn these challenges into opportunities. Together, we will continue to move forward with determination, in security and peace.

I particularly appreciate the unwavering and massive support you have always given me over the years. It is this unwavering trust that has inspired my tireless efforts to meet your aspirations. Your trust is both an honour and a compass for my actions in steering our beloved and beautiful country.

I can assure you that my resolve to serve you remains steadfast and grows stronger by the day as we address the immense challenges facing us.

Fellow Cameroonians,
My Dear Compatriots,

It is now time for me to extend to each and every one of you, my best wishes for a Happy and Prosperous New Year 2025.

Long live the Republic!
Long live Cameroon!