April 2014 · N° 15

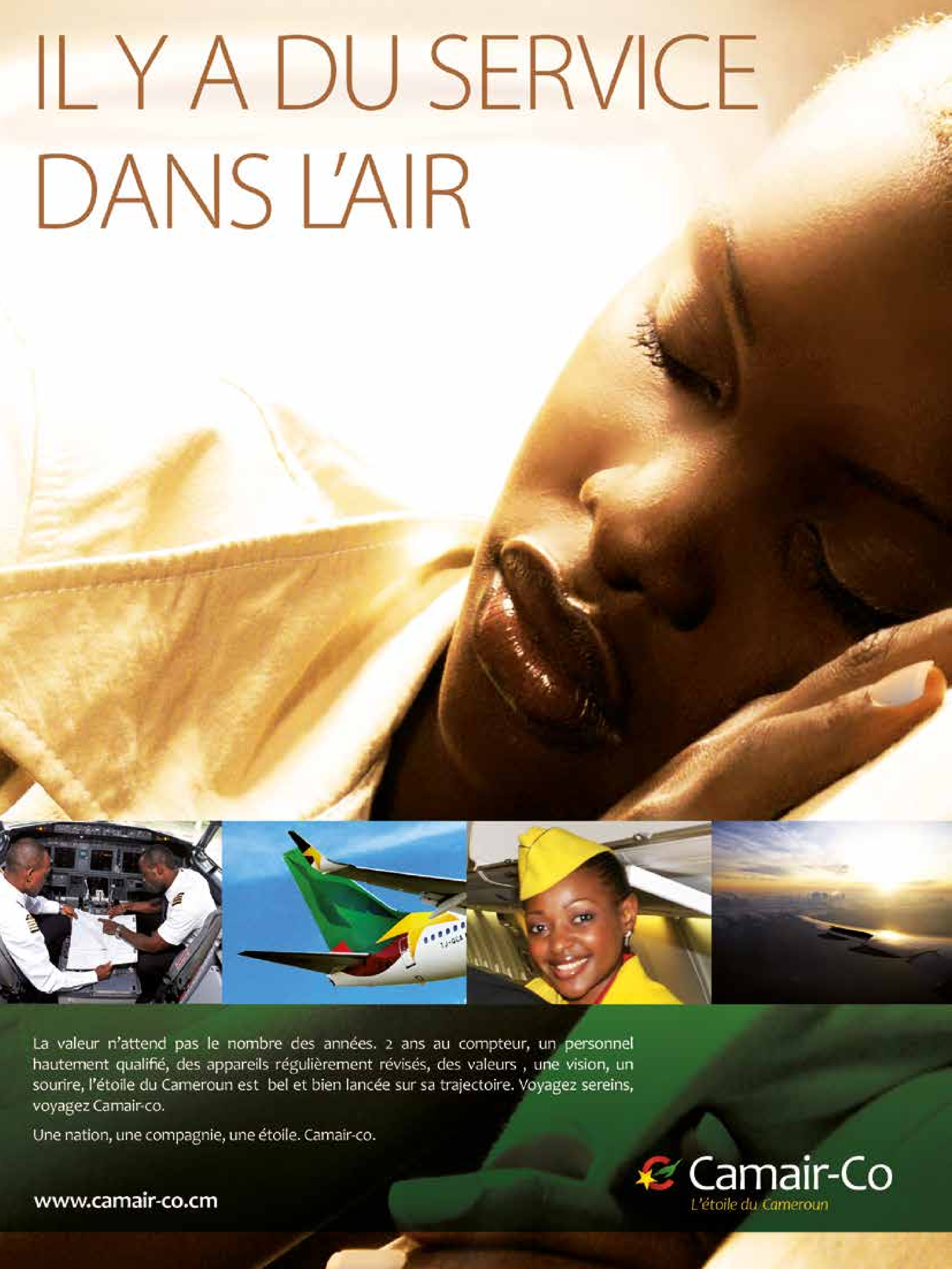
BUSINESS IN CAMEROON

MAJOR PROJECTS
AGRICULTURE
ENERGY
MINING
INDUSTRY
SERVICES
FINANCE

André Fotso: "Cameroon's diaspora has the potential to accelerate our growth..."

Brazil 2014: "Lions today, Lions for always... We believe in the Lions"

Serge Yanic Nana: "If iron price goes up, the State will bring in more income tax"*


IL Y A DU SERVICE DANS L'AIR
La valeur n'attend pas le nombre des années. 2 ans au compteur, un personnel hautement qualifié, des appareils régulièrement révisés, des valeurs , une vision, un sourire, l'étoile du Cameroun est bel et bien lancée sur sa trajectoire. Voyagez sereins, voyagez Camair-co.
Une nation, une compagnie, une étoile. Camair-co.
Camair-Co
L'étoile du Cameroun
www.camair-co.cm

Yasmine Bahri-Domon

The road to emergence

The new business-oriented Cameroon is advancing in leaps and bounds that lead us to believe that the country will achieve emergence by 2035. Who better than Andre Fotso, president of GICAM, the Cameroonian association of business leaders, to confirm if this is the true? Although Cameroon's growth rate has maintained a stagnant 4.8%, which was in keeping with the last budgetary period, positive signs of growth are expected by the end of 2014, which promises to be a good year for investment. We are only at the start of the second quarter, but the figures speak for themselves. The compass set by President Paul Biya aims to outdo the 5.1% achieved in 2012. This is quite possible for 2014. The business world is on the move. Investors are rushing to the shores of a country of peace, national unity and social stability. How could they not? In only a few years, Cameroon has sufficiently improved the business start-up process. This, along with the banking sector's high liquidity are undeniably favourable factors for accessing loans for new investments. Since 2010, the Cameroonian government has significantly opened-up the private sector to accelerate growth. In this sense, public-private partnership is essential along with more openness to establishing large joint-ventures with other business communities similar to the current arrangement with Côte d'Ivoire which has had trade volume soar by over 500%. The recent opening of the SME Promotion Agency, the on-going creation of the SME Bank, and the weaving of partnerships with new economic powers will no doubt enable Cameroon to considerably climb in *Doing Business.*

To implement the State's investment programme and the putting into place of infrastructure, 14 projects of interest have been identified in this edition of *Business in Cameroon*. To achieve this, Cameroon opened its doors to private and foreign investors. But this was only one of the many endless efforts undertaken to find effective partners. There are fourteen profitable projects on the table. They are all as fruitful as the investor protection and promotion partnership recently signed by Cameroon and Canada, and there are many economic opportunities such as the call for tenders for the polyvalent terminal at Kribi Deep Water Port. Five of the most diversified competitors are fighting for rights to the said terminal which promises to be quite profitable. As one can see, Cameroon is not only undergoing renewal in areas such as construction and energy as the business community is also creating numerous partnerships. This is an evident sign of renewed confidence in Cameroon which has been advancing steadily. It is due to this renewed faith in a country where the business climate is becoming more and more favourable for investment that Moroccan insurance companies are now engaging. The sector is open, fruitful and lucrative. In March, in less than a week, two major Moroccan insurance companies announced their intent to enter the CIMA zone's 2nd market. Cameroon welcomes them! So, there was no April fool's prank in the statement that Cameroon is on the move or that investors are now more confident. Cameroon truly on the way to emergence.

BUSINESS IN CAMEROON
Publisher • Mediamania Sàrl • 6, rue du Léman • 1201 Genève • Suisse
Publication Director • Yasmine BAHRI-DOMON
Contributors • Beaugas-Orain DJOYUM, Idriss LINGE, Brice R. MBODIAM
Operator • Médiamania Sàrl • www.mediamania.pro • Design : Jérémie FLAUX, Web : Christian ZANARDI, Translation : Craig Bloomfield
Advertisement • Médiamania, Genève • In Cameroon • Albert MASSIMB • almassimb@yahoo.fr • Tel : 00 237 94 66 94 59 / 00 237 77 75 13 98
Printing • Rotimpres, Aiguaviva, Espagne
Circulation • Albert MASSIMB • almassimb@yahoo.fr • Tel : 00 237 94 66 94 59 ou 00 237 77 75 13 98
Free – cannot be sold

CONTENTS

06 ▸ Casting

08 ▸ Insurance: Moroccan companies bet on Cameroonian market

11 ▸ André Fotso: "*Cameroon will achieve emergence by 2035*"

16 ▸ Cameroun and Canada sign an agreement to promote and protect investors

16 ▸ World Bank provides 25 billion FCfa to reduce poverty in 65,000 Cameroonian homes

17 ▸ The CEEAC to create Congo-Cameroon transport facilitation committee

17 ▸ Trade between Cameroon and Côte d'Ivoire climbed 500% in 3 years

18 ▸ Cameroon: UCCAO exported 600 tonnes of Arabica coffee in 2013

18 ▸ Cameroonian coffee exports plummet by 50% on February 31, 2014

19 ▸ Dutch company Théobroma to finance the production of 4,000 tonnes of cocoa certified in Cameroon

19 ▸ Cameroon: The CICC's "New Generation" programme creates 1,235 acres of cocoa plants

19 ▸ Cameroon: World Cocoa Foundation to finance 37 acres of seed production field

20 ▸ Cameroon seeks private partners for 14 projects in energy and infrastructure

21 ▸ Construction creates 9,953 jobs in Cameroun, according to Minister Zacharie Pérévet

21 ▸ Five companies shortlisted to run multipurpose terminal at Kribi deep sea port

21 ▸ Cameroon: Turkish billionaire Mehmet Nazif Gunal wants to invest in infrastructure and energy

22 ▸ The Douala Stock Exchange lists two new bonds starting in February 2014

22 ▸ SCB Cameroun promises 7 billion FCfa allotment for SME loans in 2014

22 ▸ Cameroon: Ecobank to sell Crédit foncier real estate financing products

23 ▸ Cameroon: BEAC starts Ebolowa centre construction

23 Thanks to 143% in profits in 2013, Ecobank Cameroun to distribute a 35,000 FCfa dividend

24 Viettel asks government of Cameroon to extend its 3G monopoly

24 Cameroon: companies to make financial market bids on-line by 2015

25 Brazil 2014: Orange Cameroon spends big for Lions indomptables

27 Cameroon starts audit of construction work for WACS submarine cable laying

27 Brussels Airlines to fly with MTN Cameroon's Mobile Money

27 Cameroon: companies to pay their income taxes via cell phone

28 Addax Petroleum extends Atwood Aurora's offshore drilling contract

28 Gaz du Cameroun increases production

28 Sterling Energy to leave Cameroon if oil search on Ntem block turns-up dry

29 Caracal Energy out of Canada to raise transit fees for Chadian oil in Cameroon

29 Cameroun makes 180° turn-around on pipeline construction project for oil product distribution

29 The environmental management plan for the Mentchum Dam will cost 1.12 billion

30 Noble Resources to buy first ten years of iron production from Mbalam-Nabeba ore

31 "If the price of iron goes up, the State will bring in more income tax"

32 East Cameroon mining companies accused of illegally exploiting forests

32 More than 1,090 new mining permits handed out in East Cameroon since the start of 2014

33 Cameroon rubber exports to China fall by 43% since January 2014

33 Trade between Cameroon and Morocco reached 25.5 billion FCfa in 2013

33 Two Moroccan-Cameroonian business centres will be created in Douala and Casablanca

34 Charles Booto à Ngon: the guardian of norms and standards

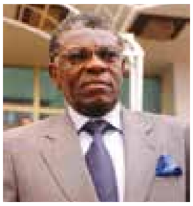
CASTING

FRÉDÉRIC MBOTTO EDIMO

On March 28, 2014, Cameroon Airlines Corporation (Camair Co), Cameroon's national airline, will celebrate its third anniversary since being created by presidential decree on September 11, 2006. This celebration, however, comes at a time marred by financial difficulty as the public company, according to authorised sources, has an accumulated debt of 14 billion FCfa.

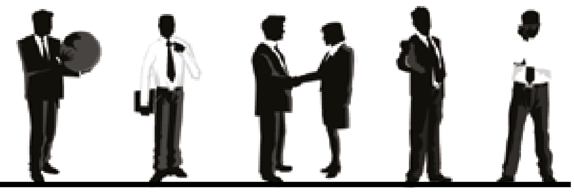
The company's new management, in place since October 2013, has been trying to absorb this debt for six months now through restructuring aimed at reducing the company's expenses. It is to this end that company heads announced the general management's return to the company's headquarters to share the high rent which previously gobbled up 200 million FCfa per annum.

LOUIS BAPES BAPES



The Cameroonian Minister of Secondary Education, Louis Bapes Bapes was put in a holding cell in the Kondengui central prison on March 31, 2014 then released 24 hours later. Before his incarceration and prompt release, he had ignored a summons to the Special Crimes Tribunal, an exceptional jurisdiction created by President Paul Biya to handle public fund money laundering cases.

Managing Director at Magzi for thirty years (1974-2004) and figure head of the reigning local party in the coastal region, Mr Bapes Bapes was only replaced at the head of the public organisation in 2004 when he was already managing the Secondary Education portfolio in Cameroonian government for two years after his 2002 appointment, as Minister or Technical Education and Professional Training.



ROBERT NKILI

According to the Cameroonian Minister of Transportation, Robert Nkili, port shipments have increased by 31% in 2013. The rise is attributed mainly to Douala Port. This was revealed following the Cameroonian government's cabinet meeting on February 26, 2014 where it was noted that Douala accounted for "95% of operations and 98% of sales."

Minister Nkili stated that, despite a slowdown in activities between November and December 2013 due to maintenance work on one of the gantry cranes, the sub-regional port reached the record volume of 10 million tonnes in 2013. Cameroon currently has four ports: Douala in the coastal area, Limbé in the South-East, Garoua in the North and Kribi in the South. These ports, highlights Robert Nkili, "have varying levels of activity."

FRANÇOIS MEFINDJA FOKA

Involved in the roasting of Arabica coffee in Cameroon, the Central Union of Agricultural Cooperatives of the West (UCCAO) sold 100 tonnes of ground coffee in 2013. This was the announcement made by the organisation's head, François Mefinja Foka.

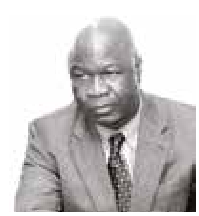
According to coffee industry experts, this is the largest output by the 120 coffee roasting factories in Cameroon. Unlike cocoa, coffee roasting is done locally, much to the delight of the Interprofessional Cocoa and Coffee Council (CICC). According to Omer Gatien Malédy, CICC Executive Secretary, "with the exception of soluble coffee, national demand is over 90% covered by local coffee roasters" who run around 20 brands and, he stressed, "have nothing to be ashamed of compared to leading international brands" whom Cameroon generally outdoes "in winning numerous international awards"

JEAN PHILIPPE GUILLAUME

According to Jean Philippe Guillaume, Managing Director of the Cameroonian subsidiary of Société générale, the financial difficulties raised by the Central African States Bank, particularly Cameroon, are "*the wrong debate*". Speaking on March 10, 2014 in Yaoundé, at a sub-regional conference on infrastructural development in Central Africa, SG Cameroon Managing Director pointed out that local banks "*are not sought out*" to finance these infrastructures.

He goes on to indicate that the banks are overflowing with the resources required to assist the State with its projects. "*We have short-term deposits that account for 80% of our portfolio. But we also have long-term resources; around 20%,*" he stated before adding that SG Cameroon currently has a long-term line of credit estimated at 120 billion FCfa.

ESSIMI MENYÉ



Outlining "*the support measures planned to ensure that the 2014 agricultural goes well*" in Cameroon, during the Cameroonian government council in February 2014 in Yaoundé, the Minister of Agriculture, Essimi Menyé announced the State's acquisition of 12,025 tonnes of mineral fertiliser and 525 tonnes of organic matter. These fertilisers will be made available to producers in order to guarantee good harvests.

Besides these inputs, Minister Menyé also announced the "*continued promotion of the cooperative movement, the construction of 20 kilometres of collection paths and the maintenance of 200 other kilometres, the operationalization of the farms and engine pools as well as training close to 2000 young people in the schools and centres on the technical itineraries concurrently with the installation of 1,150 young farmers on new farms.*"

Insurance: Moroccan companies bet on Cameroonian market

Last month, in the space of a week, two Moroccan insurance companies announced their arrival in the CIMA zone's second largest market.

The second market behind Côte d'Ivoire, out of the 14 that make up the Inter-African Conference of Insurance Markets (CIMA), Cameroon is making waves. After the interest expressed by Ogar, the insurance leader in Gabon, in the Cameroonian market with the purchase of 35% of Chanas Assurances, other countries have stepped up to the podium to show their interest as well in the Cameroonian market which made 154.2 billion FCfa in 2012 (compared to 209 billion for Côte d'Ivoire) based on CIMA's figures.
The Moroccan insurer, RMA Watanya announced, in March 2014, the acquisition of four companies operating in "three key countries" that fall under the jurisdiction of CIMA, the Central and West African insurance watchdog. The insurance subsidiary of business man Othman Benjelloun's FinanceCom stated that the three CIMA zone countries were "targeted due to their market share size and their level of development."
Although RMA Watanya has named neither the countries nor the companies that have been acquired, reliable sources have alleged that the acquisitions are the four subsidiaries of the Belife Insurance Groupe out of Côte d'Ivoire, including Beneficial Life Insurance S.A Cameroon and Beneficial General Insurance S.A Cameroon. The Moroccan insurance company allegedly bought 38% of Belife Insurance's Cameroonian subsidiaries for 3.1 billion FCfa (around 6.2 million dollars) through social capital enlargement. The acquisition line-up is rounded out by Beneficial Life Insurance S.A Togo and Belife Insurance S.A Côte d'Ivoire.

BENEFICIAL HOLDS HANDING-OVER GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Only a few days after the acquisitions being announced, including Cameroon's, the Chairman of the Board at Beneficial Life Insurance SA issued a press release inviting shareholders to two mixed general assemblies on April 2 and 4 in Douala. While the first general assembly focused primarily on "the ratififcation of decisions taken since 1st January 2009", the April 4 meeting was devoted to "increasing capital and statutory adjustments" explained the Board Chairman's communiqué in which he revealed an agenda directly influenced by the Cameroonian company asset buy-out by RMA Watanya.
The Moroccan insurance company's arrival on the two largest CIMA markets (Cameroon and Côte d'Ivoire) as well as the seventh (Togo) confirms the group's aim "to be present in more than ten African countries by the end of the decade, and to aspire to cumulated sales totalling 400-500 million dollars (200-250 billion FCfa)," stated the Moroccan insurance company when it announced the new acquisitions.
Though RMA Watanya is unknown in Cameroon, its parent company, FinanceCom has already been operating in the sector, particularly though its financial subsidiary, the Moroccan Bank for Foreign

Trade (BMCE) which has a branch in Cameroon's economic capital, Douala, and plans to expand there in the years to come.

FROM TUNISIA TO CAMEROON

RMA Watanya had barely announced its plans to come to Cameroon when its fellow Moroccan company, Wafa Assurance, the insurance wing of the Attijariwafa Banking Group, revealed that it too will be coming to Cameroon. The Moroccan insurance market leader has also just announced green field set-ups in Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon and Congo.

Translation: "For our Sub-Saharan projects, we won't be doing acquisitions as planned. We will duplicate the approach used in Tunisia, meaning that we will create a new entity," announced Mohamed Ramses Arroub, CEO of Wafa Assurance during the presentation of the company's 2013 results. In short, the Moroccan insurance company which previously had acquisitions planned for certain countries has changed strategy following the success of Wafa Assurance's green field set-up in Tunisia. Indeed, according to the Moroccan insurance giant, in the space of 7 months of activity, Wafa Assurance's Tunisian subsidiary, a specialist in life insurance, made 89.6 million Moroccan dirhams in sales and bit off around 7% of market share by using the Attijari-Bank Tunisie network, Attijariwafa Bank's local subsidiary.

The second market behind Côte d'Ivoire, out of the 14 that make up the Inter-African Conference of Insurance Markets (CIMA), Cameroon is making waves.

These results are achievable in Cameroon where the insurance penetration rate is still very low, and where Attijariwafa Bank has bought assets in Société commerciale de banque (SCB). This banking establishment has an excellent record and is expanding its network by creating new agencies.

Wafa Assurance's strategic shift, which prioritises creating a Cameroonian subsidiary from scratch instead of buying assets in an existing company, is good news for job hunters as the creation of a new company that aims to expand rapidly to conquer the market, goes hand in hand with job creation.

Brice R. Mbodiam

André Fotso: "*Cameroon will achieve emergence by 2035*"

Head of Cameroon's business leader organisation, GICAM, for two years now, this 54 year old steward of industry runs the Taf Investment Group, a Cameroonian holding that comprises three companies (3T, FME gaz and Cometal). In this interview with the *Agence Ecofin*, the former Chairman of the Board at Ecobank Cameroon gives an objective assessment of the Cameroonian economy based on the nation's aim to enter the circle of "emerging countries" by 2035.

Business in Cameroon: Cameroon's growth rate this year is projected to be 4.8%, which means it is at a standstill relative to 2013 when compared to 5.1% in 2012 and 4.1% in 2011. We're far from GICAM's target of an additional point per annum. What do you think is the obstacle?

André Fotso: In the new paradigm that GICAM has been in for the last two years, we have set for ourselves the goal to engage all stakeholders in the achievement of an ambitious, but essential objective: growth acceleration. We had set as the cornerstone of our goals the attainment of one growth point per annum starting in 2013.

We have to admit that the numbers aren't heading in that direction. After passing 5% in 2012, we slipped again in 2013. This calls for real analysis and reflection by all entities. This exercise in introspection is all the more necessary when one notes that the little upward movement we have seen is due to increased oil and electricity production resulting from the Kribi gas plant being back in service and increased public investment in infrastructure within the framework of on-going restructuring programmes.

BC: To what extent, if any, is the Cameroonian private sector responsible for this goal not being achieved?

AF: In 2013, private sector performance was stagnant or even regressive. If nothing else, it certainly wasn't dynamic enough. With the exception of construction, other sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing, trade and services all had lacklustre performances. Companies have been languishing in a restrictive climate that blocks investment that is essential to boosting their activities.

In the short-term, our government must adopt urgent, coherent measures to give the cardiac shock needed. Among the decisive measures needed to get business leaders out of their collective depression, I would mention:

1. Settling owed VAT credit by issuing, if necessary, a specific bond loan to that effect
2. Incorporating existing companies in the investment incentive code
3. Building commercial areas in Douala and Yaoundé
4. Commencing roadwork to build the Yaoundé-Douala highway, with entrances to the east and west of Douala
5. Opening SME Bank and Agricultural Bank branches
6. Developing legislation that requires that contractual payment deadlines be respected
7. Launching the Export Promotion Agency

BC: International organisations and investors have described Cameroon's business climate as difficult (we lost seven points in the last *Doing Business* ranking). Do you share this opinion?

AF: To be honest, it's difficult to say the contrary when you're 168th out of 189 in a rating publication that has become the reference guide for investing in countries worldwide. But we have to also acknowledge the efforts and drive of various stakeholders, particularly government, to turn this trend around. After the last Cameroon Business Forum, we hope to see momentum like what preceded the setting-up of this platform in 2006. It is an initiative which led to reforms that enabled us to climb by 12 points between 2010 and 2011.

BC: In your opinion, what are the major reforms that have been made in recent years by the Cameroonian government to make the country more attractive?
AF: I'll start by talking about the ones that made us move up the Doing Business ladder in 2010-2011: the putting in place of Business Creation Formalities Centres in Douala and Yaoundé. These are agencies where all administrations involved in the business creation process may be found. There is also the improvement of loan access regulations through the passing of the OHADA Standardisation Axr on Commercial Law as well as the organisation of sureties. The latter revision allowed for the expansion of assets that may be used as collateral for loans. There is also the effective appointment of magistrates in the commercial courts, the launching of the e-regulations project, all of which are reforms intended to simplify international trade procedures and tax policy.

En 2013, four major achievements deserve to be highlighted. These include private investment incentive legislation and an act governing economic zones. There also the creation of the SME Promotion Agency and the publication of a text instituting the liberalisation of legal announcements.

BC: Are there areas that we haven't adequately explored?
AF: From our point of view, it would be a mistake to have separate approaches. To be efficient, we must courageously apply coherent measures that must be engaged harmoniously and concurrently in all sectors (primary, secondary and tertiary), especially in growth niches so that the electrical shock will provoke real change for tangible results. Current initiatives stall due to their punctual nature, appearing isolated and often too late, or in the wrong form.

With regards to Doing Business in particular, Cameroon did not set a specific target in terms of improving our rank. And so, the relevance of some reforms which could have been implemented was not apparent. As you know, timing is also important. The Investment Charter illustrates this. Some texts for the application of this law are still outstanding for ten years now.

André Fotso: "*Companies have been languishing in a restrictive climate that blocks investment that is essential to boosting their activities.*"

BC: What is GICAM doing to make Cameroon more appealing to investors?
AF: Promoting Cameroonian business is GICAM's third focal area. We have approached business leaders in partner countries and have established partnerships with some of them. At the same time, we are participating in pro-trade missions and fairs and forums abroad where we push Cameroon as a destination. We have also been hosting many delegations to whom we present our country's potential as well as the benefits of investing in Cameroon.

To date, we have been responding to the many requests from potential investors seeking more information and we regularly accompany the Head of State and the Minister of Economy on trips abroad.

One of the focuses of this effort is the Cameroonian entrepreneurial diaspora. We've developed our initiative to incorporate them in our activities and have even offered them inclusion in our organisation as associate members. So, we're working to encourage them to return to use their know-how in Cameroon and are looking for joint venture partners to invest in their home country. Our belief is that the diaspora has the potential to facilitate our movement to accelerate growth.

BC: GICAM has just published a collection of "100 proposals to achieve Cameroon's emergence" by 2035. In a few words, what are you really proposing?
AF: In its work, our Economic Reflection Circle (CREG) went over the various sectors of our economy with a fine-toothed comb using systemic analysis based on proven scientific methods. This analysis yielded 146 measures, of which 100 were used due to their importance. These are measures that our economic policy must take into account to ensure that we achieve emergence.

These 100 proposals to achieve emergence in Cameroon cover four major sections. In the first section on the economy as a whole, it presents a framework for the path to emergence based on specific goals related to economic growth. It also analyses the importance of the quality of institutions involved in the entire process of economic modernisation.

The second section looks at the primary sector in which agriculture is identified as the vehicle for growth par excellence with an assessment of the failure of current programmes is apparent in forestry, fishing and fisheries.

The third section looks at the most critical sector of all: the secondary sector. Five sub-sectors are looked at here: extractive industries, food industries, manufacturing, electricity and gas and construction.

After the secondary sector, three tertiary sub-sectors are examined: trade, transportation, financial markets as well as cross-cutting: corporate citizenship.

BC: In this work, GICAM notes that there are large gaps between the actions intended to be taken as 2010, such as those outlined in the strategy Document for Growth and Employment (DSCE) and the reality of their implementation on the ground. In your opinion, what are the main causes of this roadblock?
AF: Beyond the erratically evolving international economic environment as a factor in recent years, the internal difficulties are the same as those mentioned above when I spoke about the business climate: necessary structural projects that are not completed within deadlines, lengthy decision implementation, domestic debt including outstanding VAT credits hitting company cash flow, promoters who have no support, a low business facility ranking that discourages foreign investors, the burden of an administration nit-picking through reforms without demonstrating any real cohesion in the various actions undertaken.

BC: In light of all of this, do you think that Cameroon's plan to become an emerging country by 2035 is feasible?
AF: Without the slightest hesitation, I can say yes. In terms of our country's potential and the quality of our human resources, we still believe that the emergence target can be attained. But it is vital that we mobilise all that we can and make the paradigm shift a reality with the adoption of a results-based outlook, allaying fears of change and consistently re-evaluating ourselves individually and collectively.

The systematic use of monitoring and periodic evaluations of reforms undertaken are necessary. The aim is to make business more attractive in order to bolster public and private investment, both internally and externally, to capitalise on these efforts currently being made via the current major infrastructural construction projects.

André Fotso: *"In terms of our country's potential and the quality of our human resources, we still believe that the emergence target can be attained."*

BC: Cameroon has been involved in major projects for the last three years, but one can see that Cameroonian companies are absent from the sites. Are local companies not up to scratch?
AF: We do regret the absence of local companies in the major projects. One of the reasons for this is that

Scale model of Bridge over Wouri.

they don't always have the necessary capacities in adequate levels for the projects. The question is: is it in our best interest to ensure their participation in these construction projects. The answer is undeniably clear when we look at the case of other countries. These massive investments should be used as a spring board for local companies in targeted sectors. For this, there has to be a real internalisation policy, the transfer of know-how and the transfer of technology so that these investments can pull along the other sectors of the economy. This can be done through subtracting, co-contracting or other mechanisms.

"To win new economic partnerships, one need not lose the old ones."

The Prime Minister signed a directive to project heads to ensure that 30%-40% of markets are reserved for national companies. But no assessment allows one to ensure the effectiveness of the guidelines, particularly since the implementation required the identification of activities likely to be sub-contracted and an evaluation of national capacities in order to strengthen the process.

BC: Is this to enable Cameroonian entrepreneurs to have a little more grit than GICAM and Ivorian business leaders were able to muster in the margins of the last "Investing in Cameroon Forum" to create joint ventures to make more headway on public markets, both in Central and Western Africa?

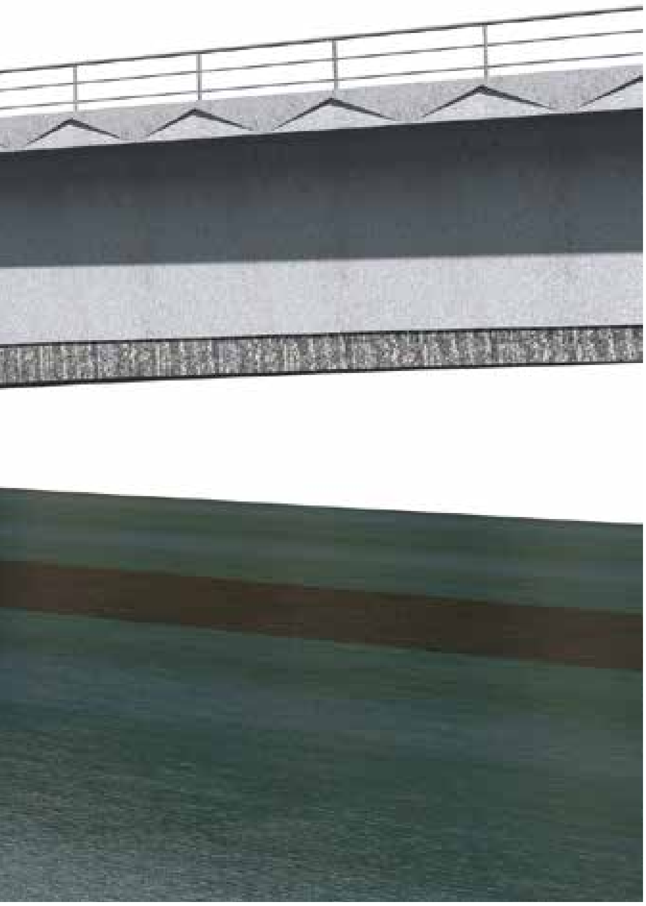
AF: This is one of the solutions that we are considering. In the same thrust for regional integration, we think that the effectiveness and consolidation of South-South cooperation are essential in the pursuit of the sustainable economic and social development of African countries.

"We do regret the absence of local companies in the major projects. One of the reasons for this is that they don't always have the necessary capacities in adequate levels for the projects."

This is why we have also taken steps to strengthen our relations with Nigerian business leaders. The process is moving along. With its market share alone, Nigeria is a logical economic partner for our country and we have everything to gain in structured closer relations with our Nigerian counterparts.

BC: What do you think about what some have been calling "the Chinese spring" for investment in Cameroon?

AF: Indeed, China has set itself apart over the last few years due to its presence in the financing and completion of infrastructure in Africa as a whole, and in Cameroon in particular. Since 2006, declared by China as "the Year of Africa", Chinese involvement in terms of investment in infrastructure in Sub-Saharan Africa has quadrupled. One must not forget that poor



infrastructure slows growth by 2% each year and limits company productivity by 40%.

But as in all situations of this nature, it's up to African countries to take measures to make the most of the presence of the Chinese. When you consider that China has been offering virtual "packages" of financing, studies, conceptualisation and construction, you can understand why there are so few of our companies in the process.

BC: Looking at the new landscape of the global economy, does the road to salvation for developing countries such as Cameroon begin with intensified cooperation with emerging economies that seem to have a better grasp of the realities of sub-development having walked that journey for decades?
AF: It also includes the necessary consolidation of partnerships already in existence with countries that have long lived prosperously as we hope to do. To win new economic partnerships, one need not lose the old ones. This context explains the changes that characterise today's global economic geopolitics. We must take into account, anticipate and use this to better our country and our people.

BC: In the last few months, a number of Cameroonian companies made the switch from electricity to natural gas. Is this fuel a sustainable solution to the energy shortage the country has been facing? If so, what opportunities does natural gas present?
AF: The use of new energy sources provides industrial companies with a favourable alternative. However, as we like to reiterate, natural gas is no panacea. It gives some relief, but doesn't address all our needs. In energy, the key for now is to combine all of these sources. In light of our country's current energy shortage, hydro-electricity will be an ideal solution because it is less difficult.

BC: Cameroon has until October 31, 2014 to ratify the EPAs signed with the European Union in 2009. What do you think will be the positive and negative ramifications of this for Cameroonian companies and the Cameroonian economy?
AF: EPAs are an important, but sensitive topic for our country as it is an agreement that will determine the type of partnership that Cameroon wishes, as a sovereign nation, to develop with the European Union and its 28 members over the long-term. The European Union remains our main trade pathway, representing 45%-60% of our exports and, unlike with other major partners, our trade with the EU is advantageous to us.

Our organisation is favourable to the establishment of a holistic, balanced regional EPA that takes development into account. The negotiation process for these agreements has been on-going for ten years now and everyone has always been in agreement that this was the right direction. Even though the stalemate in negotiations since 2007 considerably questions this outlook, our primary concern remains the protection of our interests, particularly for our companies. Whatever decision is taken, it will have major repercussions on public finance, on the competitiveness of our companies, on social development and on regional integration.

In many areas, the stakes depend less on the decision itself and more on the strategies and reforms that have to be undertaken to limit threats and gain the maximum from the resulting opportunities, notably in the strengthening of our companies' capacities.

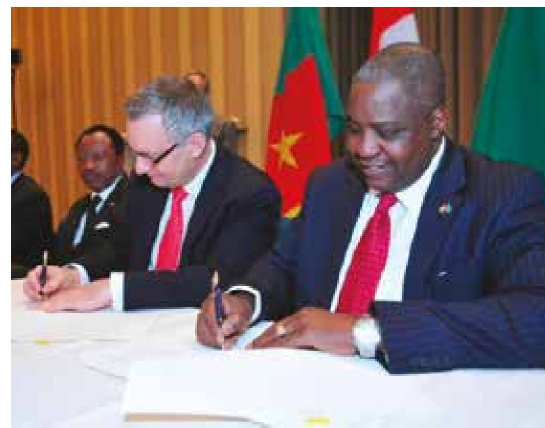
André Fotso: "*The use of new energy sources provides industrial companies with a favourable alternative. However, as we like to reiterate, natural gas is no panacea. It gives some relief, but doesn't address all our needs.*"

Interview by
Brice R. Mbodiam

PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

Cameroun and Canada sign an agreement to promote and protect investors

On March 3, 2014, the Cameroonian Minister of Economy, Emmanuel Nganou Djoumessi, and the Canadian Minister of International Trade, Ed Fast, signed a promotion and protection agreement geared towards Cameroonian and Canadian investors.
The agreement was signed during the annual Franco-Mine Forum which brought together some 500 participants from French-speaking mining countries. The event was held by the Canadian Mining, Metallurgy and Oil Institute (ICM). This agreement is the happy outcome of a letter of intent signed a year earlier by the same government officials.
According to figures provided by the Canadian High Commission in Cameroon, trade between the two countries rose from 18 to 25.5 billion FCfa between 2010 and 2012, which marks a 41.6% increase. Trade between the two nations is more dynamic in agri-foods, pharmaceutics, infrastructure and mining, mechanical equipment, textiles, wood and wood bi-products.



World Bank provides 25 billion FCfa to reduce poverty in 65,000 Cameroonian homes

The Cameroonian government and the World Bank signed a financing agreement on April 2, 2014, for the social safety net project in Cameroon which is to assist 420,000 persons deemed to be vulnerable. The project involves monetary transfers and public works job opportunities for local populations. This was the information revealed in a press release issued in an official press release by the technical and financial partner.
This joint project of The Bretton Woods institution and the Cameroonian government had a boost on March 21, 2013 with the World Bank's board's approval of 50 million US dollars (around 25 billion FCfa) to support Cameroon in the conception and implementation of a national system of social safety nets.
On the Cameroonian side, things have sped up with the issuance of a Presidential decree on March 18, 2014, leading the Minister of Economy "to sign, with the International Development Association (IDA), a loan agreement for 32.5 million in Special Drawing Rights (SDR) corresponding to 50 million USD which is approximately 25 billion FCfa for project financing."
The project involves programmes that can touch as many as 65,000 poor and vulnerable homes in five regions deemed the poorest and most vulnerable in Cameroon, namely Adamaoua, East, North, Extreme North and North West. The project will also cover some 5,000 homes in Yaoundé and Douala.

PUBLIC WORKS

For two years, eligible households will receive a fund transfer every two months for a total of 720,000 FCfa (around 1,400 USD) as well as training activities to improve their health, nutrition, education and skills. Low-income households will have the possibility of working 60 days per year during agricultural off-season. The activities will include doing public works such as road maintenance and tree-planting.
At the offices of the World Bank in Yaoundé, the development programme's merits are hailed. "Cameroon's new social net will help to accelerate poverty reduction by saving some of the most vulnerable families from economic shocks and crises so that they may better invest in their children's future," stated Gregor Binkert, the World Bank's Country Director to Cameron while citing the project's success stories in Rwanda, Ethiopia and Niger.
However, in nations where the social safety nets yielded results, the state of the socio-economic environment was a determining factor. In most cases, governments have been able to ensure that fundamental questions such as easier access to health care, meaningful educational and employment policies as well as efficient reforms to the business environment which have been achieved with some degree of success.

Idriss Linge

The CEEAC to create Congo-Cameroon transport facilitation committee

Secretary General of the Economic Community of Central African States (CEEAC) has just launched a call for expressions of interest to recruit consultants to conduct a study on the putting in place of a "management committee for the Brazzaville-Yaoundé corridor." This committee will work to facilitate transportation activity between the Congo and Cameroon, to benefit on-going construction of Ketta Road in Congo to Djoum, Cameroon using financing from the African Development Fund (FAD).

The consultant sought by the CEEAC to conduct this study must clearly define the form and composition of the committee, its financing method, its rules and operational procedures, propose effective implementation modalities and elaborate initial activity over a period of three years with analysis of the results.

The setting-up of the committee should enable the removal of obstacles to increased trade flow between the two countries. These are obstacles that Jean Jacques Samba, then Secretary General of Unicongo, an organisation of Congolese business leaders, included in "the illegal taxes" that transporters are forced to pay, both on the Congolese and Cameroonian sides of the border. These "illegal taxes", stressed Mr Samba at Salon Promote 2011 in Yaoundé, significantly increase transportation costs, adding from a 1/3 up to a 1/4 of the price of products exported by one country or the other.

Trade between Cameroon and Côte d'Ivoire climbed 500% in 3 years

According to Charles Koffi Diby, Ivorian Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, trade between Cameroon and Côte d'Ivoire increased considerably in 2013, reaching 53 billion FCfa compared to 33 billion FCfa in only 2012. This represents an increase of 20 billion in absolute value. The Ivorian cabinet member revealed these figures in Abidjan on March 7, 2014, during the Ivoiran/Cameroonian mixed commission which had resumed after 33 years of lethargy.

During this meeting between the two countries, 10 bilateral agreements were signed to boost economic cooperation between Cameroon and Côte d'Ivoire which has been growing steadily for the last three years. Indeed, according to official statistics, between 2011, the year when trade between the two countries reached 10 billion FCfa, and 2013, this indicator grew by over 500% - in just three years.

This dynamism apparent in the economic cooperation between the two countries is definitely derived from initiatives taken for a few years now by both parties in an effort to strengthen their economic ties. It was to this end that Côte d'Ivoire held the second "Ivorian week in Cameroon" in October 2013 which featured 50 participants from Côte d'Ivoire.

In February, Groupement interpatronal du Cameroun (GICAM), had asked the Ivorian government to put aside 24 acres for Cameroonian businesses. This occurred during the "Invest in Côte d'Ivoire" forum during which Ivorian and Cameroonian business heads decided to promote the creation of joint ventures in order to conquer the markets of West and Central Africa together.

AGRIBUSINESS

Cameroon: UCCAO exported 600 tonnes of Arabica coffee in 2013

According to the Managing Director of the Central Union of Western Agricultural Cooperatives (UCCAO), François Mefinja Foka, the organisation exported approximately 600 tonnes of Arabica coffee in 2012-2013. This performance in exports is superior to that of the previous season.

Without making a statistical forecast, heads of UCCAO, one of the largest cooperatives in Cameroon, intend to increase their production and export capacity in 2014. They plan to take advantage of the support provided through the coffee sector emergency restart plan announced by the Interprofessional Council for Coffee and Cocoa (CICC) in collaboration with the Cameroonian government and the European Union.

UCCAO's rise in Arabica coffee exports in 2013 attests to the general trend of how the coffee variety performed on the local market during the last season. According to the National Cocoa and Coffee Board (ONCC), Arabica exports in 2012-2013 have climbed by 5.5%, going from 2,392 to 2,523 tonnes. The leading destination for Cameroonian Arabica coffee is Germany, representing 57.2% of 2013's production

Cameroonian coffee exports plummet by 50% on February 31, 2014

Commodafrica has quoted the National Cocoa and Coffee Board (ONCC) as stating that Cameroonian coffee exports fell by close to 50% in late February relative to the same period in 2013. During the said period, the country has only exported 887 tonnes of Arabica and Robusta coffee so far, compared to 1,643 tonnes for the same period during the last season which marks a 756-tonne decline.

According to the ONCC, this decline in exports, which runs parallel with the slow-down in production, is due to "undesirable meteorological conditions". But other sources suggest that the situation is more the result of illegal exports to Nigeria as "the road network connecting some of the country's coffee zones to the economic capital, Douala (which is home to one of the nation's largest ports), is in very poor condition".

The ONCC's statistics confirms the Cameroonian coffee sector's downturn, with national production down by more than 56% in 2013. To get the sector out of its current slump, the CICC has launched an emergency rescue plan to the tune of 900 million FCfa over 6 years while the European Union has promised 15 billion FCfa in financing within the framework of the 11th FED.

Dutch company Théobroma to finance the production of 4,000 tonnes of cocoa certified in Cameroon

According to Pim Van de Langenberg, head of the Dutch company, Theobroma, this cocoa trader turned cocoa product manufacturer in 2006 (cocoa powder, cocoa butter and cocoa paste known under the name "Tulip cocoa") is launching a project which will enable the production of 4,000 tonnes of certified cocoa. The two-year project will consist of framing the activities of 2,500 farmers in the production zones of the Centre region, namely Monatélé, Obala, Goura and Bafia.
Pim Van de Langenberg stated that "a development centre will be created in which farmers will be exposed to instruments that will help them to meet quality standards by the correct usage of phytosanitary products, instruction in drying techniques, fermentation and cocoa purchasing."
Worth a total of approximately 393 million FCfa (600,000 euros), this project provides farmers with direct financing support for pre and post-harvest. The Netherlands, which consumes 70% of Cameroonian cocoa, according to official figures, will ban uncertified cocoa by 2020.

Cameroon: World Cocoa Foundation to finance 37 acres of seed production field

At the general assembly of the International Organisation for Coffee and Cocoa (CICC) recently held in Yaoundé, the Cameroonian capital, the World Cocoa Foundation (WCF) representative, Hope Sona Ebai, announced that the organisation plans to raise financing to create 37 acres of seed production field in Cameroon.
The WCF representative indicated that the project of an undisclosed value, will be done with the technical support of the Agronomic Research Institute for Development (IRAD). She added that, throughout the year, the World COCOA Foundation will be sending 320 phytosanitation specialists to train Cameroon producers.
The WCF head also revealed that the CICC will soon receive financing from the global chocolate manufacturers' organisation within the framework of the "New Generation Project" launched a few years ago with the goal of modernising cocoa producers and their plantations.

Cameroon: The CICC's "New Generation" programme creates 1,235 acres of cocoa plants

Since launching in 2012, the "New Generation" programme implemented by the Interprofessional Council for Coffee and Cocoa (CICC) which is intended to modernise cocoa producers and plantations in Cameroon, has already enabled the planting of 1,235 acres of cocoa plants by around 325 youngsters.
It is certainly due to these results that the World Cocoa Foundation (WCF) recently announced that it will be providing financing to support this Cameroonian cocoa and coffee initiative.
"New Generation" originated from a study conducted in production areas by the CICC. It revealed that the average age of cocoa producers in Cameroon was 63 years and was as high as 70 years in the West. In order to attract young people to cocoa cultivation, the CICC had decided to provide assistance each year to at least 100 young graduates of the country's agricultural schools, provided they planted at least one cocoa plant on every 7 acres of land.
Thanks to the multi-faceted support granted to these budding cocoa farmers by the CICC and particularly the personalised guidance they have received from planting seedlings to selling the harvest, the CICC hopes for not only a substantial increase in production in the years to come, but also an increased number of farmers in the country. National production reached 230,000 tonnes during the last season. The common goal of the government and Cameroonian farmers is to reach 600,000 tonnes by 2020.

INFRASTRUCTURES

Cameroon seeks private partners for 14 projects in energy and infrastructure

The Cameroonian Minister of Economy, Emmanuel Nganou Djoumessi (photo), has just published a list of 17 projects "to be completed with public-private partnerships in 2014" within the framework of the government's investment programme. The majority of these projects concern the infrastructure and energy sectors.

"Local and foreign" investors interested in the Cameroon government's call for expressions of interest have until March 31, 2014 to use the technical and financial capacities application to make their bid. This can be done at the offices of the Support Council for Partnership Contracts (CARPA), located in Yaoundé.

Applications received by CARPA will be analysed and assessed as of April 10, 2014. At the end of this first stage, five applicants will be short-listed and invited to bid in a restricted call for tenders which will then be followed by pre-qualifying dialogue before contract negotiations resulting in the selection of the winning investor.

THE 14 PROJECTS

Infrastructure

- Construction of the Douala highway
- Construction, running and maintenance of the Douala-Limbé railway
- Construction, running and maintenance of the Edéa-Kribi-Lolablé railway
- Construction, running and maintenance of three modern shopping malls in Bamenda
- Construction, running and maintenance of a multimodal bus station in Bonabéri-Douala

Energy

- Construction, running and maintenance of a hydro-electric plant in Sanaga, Kikot
- Construction, running and maintenance of a collinear dam in Moudour on the Hina
- Conceptualisation, financing, construction, running and maintenance of a wind power plant on Mount Bamboutos
- Conceptualisation, financing, construction and maintenance of a 225 KV power line between Kribi and Yaoundé

Other sectors

- Construction of a wood-processing plant in the East-South area
- Touristic improvement of the municipal lake in Yaoundé
- Upland agro-foods plant (Agrotech)
- Equipment supply, construction, running and maintenance of grinding plants
- Construction, running and maintenance of an urban forest park in the Besséké valley in Douala.

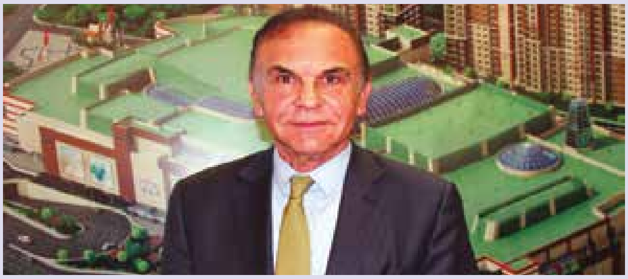
Construction creates 9,953 jobs in Cameroon, according to Minister Zacharie Pérévet

The Cameroonian Minister of Employment and Professional Training, Zacharie Pérévet, has just announced that the major construction projects in Cameroon, within the framework of the governments construction projects, have already enabled the creation of 9,953 jobs for nationals. This included 3,030 jobs in 2012, "the year that marks the start of data collection by the ministry," highlights Mr Pérévet, and 6,923 jobs in 2013.
According to the ministerial department's forecast, approximately 16,000 jobs are available to nationals through these projects. To integrate these nationals, the Ministry of Employment, in collaboration with its sub-organisations, such as the National Employment Fund (FNE), implemented a data base for skilled job applicants, to make construction projects available to companies.
But, on the ground, although nationals are present on these sites, the majority of them are in menial jobs. During a site visit paid by heads of the steering committee for the Kribi deep water port construction project, for example, the committee was surprised to find that there was no Cameroonian engineer on the site where there were 300 Chinese engineers. Asked about this, one of the heads of the Chinese company simply answered, embarrassed, that no Cameroonian engineers applied.
Yet, in a communiqué from Prime Minister Philémon Yang, relative to foreign investments and signed on June 13, 2012, jobs have to be held by nationals in specific proportions. He stresses that, "at least 50% of jobs must go to nationals, with nationals in 60% of senior posts with oversight and 85% at least for manual labour."

Five companies shortlisted to run multipurpose terminal at Kribi deep sea port

The Cameroonian government has just published the list of the five companies shortlisted after the international call for expressions of interest to run the multipurpose terminal at the Kribi deep water port. Among these companies is the French company, Necotrans, which is applying for the dealership with another entity – KPMO.
But to win the public-private partnership deal, Necotrans, which has also been eyeing the Kribi port container terminal, will have to outdo the competition, including SEA Invest-CLGG, the Société d'exploitation des ports-Marsa Maroc, the International Container Terminal Services Inc and the Dutch company, APM Terminals.
With infrastructure costing an estimated at 282 billion FCfa, financed by Eximbank of China and built by China Harbour Engineering Company (CHEC), the deep water Kribi port will welcome, according to official forecasts, its first ship in June 2014.

Cameroon: Turkish billionaire Mehmet Nazif Gunal wants to invest in infrastructure and energy



On March 25, 2014, the President of the Republic of Cameroon, Paul Biya, had a long meeting with Turkish billionaire, Mehmet Nazif Gunal. Following this talk, the businessman revealed that he had expressed his desire to the Cameroonian Head of State to participate in the building of airport and energy infrastructure in Cameroon.
Ranked the 1,151st fortune by Forbes magazine with bank accounts totalling 1.5 billion dollars (approximately 550 billion FCfa) in deposits, Mehmet Nazif Gunal, head of MNG Holdings, is also the 28th fortune in Turkey.
A self-made man, according to Forbes, the Turkish billionaire amassed his fortune by investing in construction and tourism. He owns 10 of the top hotels in Turkey as well as one that is a replica of the Kremlin. Mr Gunal also has shares in airlines, particularly through aircraft maintenance and freight.

FINANCE

The Douala Stock Exchange lists two new bonds starting in February 2014

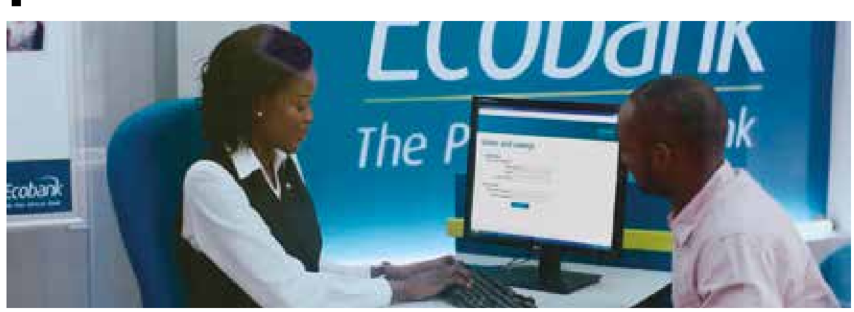
Since late January 2014, the State of Cameroon introduced its 2013-2018 bond on the compartment bond list of the Douala Stock Exchange (DSX) the securities stock exchange which enabled the government to raise 80 billion FCfa on the same market in December 2013. This information was confirmed by the DSX Managing Director, Pierre Ekoulé Mouangué.
According to the same source, February 21, 2014, the State of Chad entered the compartment bond of the Cameroonian financial market with its 2013-2018 issuance, thanks to which the country was able to raise 85 billion FCfa in order to complete financing for the construction of the Ndjamena business complex.
With these two new additions, the Cameroonian financial market now lists five bonds: the Central African States Bank (BDEAC), Société financière internationale (SFI), Cameroon's loans in 2010 and 2013, then Chad.

SCB Cameroun promises 7 billion FCfa allotment for SME loans in 2014

According to Société commerciale de banque (SCB) Cameroun's Managing Director, Jamal Ahizoune, head of the local subsidiary of the Moroccan banking group, Attijariwafa, his organisation will be allotting a total of 7 billion FCfa to SME loans in 2014 in order to address the under-capitalisation problem these businesses have been facing.
In light of the inadequate guarantees these companies face in Cameroon, the Managing Director indicated that his bank will be getting around this obstacle by "lightening the guarantee demands through the adoption of a voluntary partnership system in collaboration with international organisations in the spirit of shared risk."
With its network of 40 branches and 90 ATM machines nationwide, SCB Cameroun was particularly busy on the capitals market in 2013. The bank provided bond loans to the governments of Chad (85 billion FCfa) and Cameroon (50 billion FCfa, subscribed at 160%).

Cameroon: Ecobank to sell Crédit foncier real estate financing products

Ecobank's Cameroonian subsidiary and Crédit foncier du Cameroun (CFC) have signed an agreement joining forces to promote access to decent housing. Through the "Bankimmo" initiative resulting from this agreement, Ecobank has committed to the sales and distribution of real estate financing products provided by Crédit foncier.
This initiative seeks to inform and service local Cameroonians as well as those of the diaspora and is being done to ensure that they can benefit from the real estate financing mechanisms that Crédit foncier, Cameroon's housing bank, has created.



According to official statistics, the housing shortage in Cameroon is currently estimated at one million units. To address this problem, in addition to the agreement signed with Ecobank, the CFC is planning other forms of partnership with other institutions, starting with micro-financial entities to give its products a wider presence and increase Cameroonians' interest in them, both at home and abroad.

Cameroon: BEAC starts Ebolowa centre construction

Central African States Bank has just started a restricted international recruitment for architects “to conduct preliminary studies on the construction of a building for the future centre in Ebolowa, Cameroon” and in Oyo, Congo. According to the recruitment announcement, “the work will involve architectural and technical studies, the making of a model, assisting the project foreman with the project’s approval, the management of the work’s execution and assistance with delivery procedures.”

Interested parties must submit their application to BEAC headquarters in Yaoundé, the Cameroonian capital, no later than April 30, 2014 at 12:00 pm. Files will be opened an hour later in the presence of various applicant representatives.

With the future Ebolowa centre, the CEMAC States Central Bank, whose presence in a given town attests to the latter’s economic importance, will now have new branches in seven Cameroonian cities and towns. These are Yaoundé, where the company is headquartered, as well as Douala, Bafoussam, Garoua, Limbe and Nkongsamba.

Internal sources at the BEAC allege that the bank’s governance is thinking about opening a branch in Bertoua, the capital of East Cameroon, where almost all mining deposits are located.

Thanks to 143% in profits in 2013, Ecobank Cameroun to distribute a 35,000 FCfa dividend

During the ordinary general assembly of the Cameroonian subsidiary of pan-African bank, Ecobank Transnational Incorporated, held on March 7, 2014 in Douala, shareholders adopted the number 2 resolution which sets pricing at 35,000 FCfa per share. In total, there are 3.5 billion FCfa that will be shared among the shareholders of the bank thanks to significant profits made in 2013.

According to the bank’s sales report for the 2013 fiscal year, the net profit of Ecobank Transnational Incorporated reached 4 billion FCfa – a 143% increase relative to the previous year (1.6 billion FCfa).

This performance is also apparent in the bank’s deposits which grew by 25% in 2013 to 312.2 billion FCfa compared to 250.3 billion FCfa the previous year. Loans increased by 24% last year, amounting to 260.5 billion FCfa as opposed to 210.7 billion FCfa a year earlier. The net output has also climbed by 25% at 28.5 billion FCfa against 22.7 billion FCfa a year before. These various outcomes raised the banking institution’s overall performance which grew by 27%, going from 303.7 billion FCfa to 384.3 billion FCfa in one year.

Commenting on these results, the Chairman of the Board at Ecobank Cameroun, Martin Fontcha, indicated that

“2013 is witnessing a virtual take-off for growth after the achievement a year before. It proves that we’re on the right track, that our efforts and sacrifices have not been in vain and that the attainment of our goal to position ourselves among the market’s top 3 is at hand.”

The annual ranking of the top African banks in the magazine, The Banker, published by the British group Financial Times, had awarded, in 2013, first place to the Ecobank group in five African countries: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Liberia, Mali and Niger. Justifying the pan-African bank’s ranking, The Banker reminded readers “that the country still bears the effects of the 2008-2009 international financial crisis. But despite this environment, Ecobank Cameroun has proven that it can generate solid returns, even in a market of that nature.”

TELECOM

Viettel asks government of Cameroon to extend its 3G monopoly

The Cameroonian weekly publication, Repères, has just revealed that Viettel Cameroon, the third largest mobile telephone company, has written to the Office of the President to request that its 3G monopoly be extended. According to a concession contract signed in December 2012, Viettel Cameroon has exclusive 3G rights as of the date of the contract being signed. So, logically, the mobile telephone company's 3G monopoly will expire in December 2014.

However, the telecommunications company, after postponing its opening twice, will not be in business until September 2014, which is only three months before its 3G monopoly expires. Viettel Cameroon heads are seeking to convince the Cameroonian government to have the exclusivity clause be applicable "after the start of business" instead of counting from the date the contract was signed. If the Cameroonian government acquiesces, this would extend the period of 3G exclusivity to 2016. This monopoly has been severely criticised by MTN and Orange, the two other mobile telephone companies in Cameroon.

However, Viettel Cameroon's request comes at a bad time for the company. The 15-year concession contract signed July 7, 1999 by the Cameroonian government and Orange will come to an end in July 2014. The two parties will therefore be negotiating a new contract (if they have not already started) which will no doubt include the granting of a 3G licence in light of the criticism levied by the mobile telephone company when Viettel Cameroon received exclusive rights to 3G technology.

In February 2015, the concession contract of 15 years between Cameroon and MTN, which was first established on February 15, 2000, will also expire. Before the actual expiration and the opening of negotiations for a new concession contract, the Cameroonian subsidiary of the South-African giant, by way of its Managing Director, Karl Toriola, has already announced that it has presented the Cameroonian government with a request for a 3G licence.

During his recent media appearances, MTN Cameroon's Managing Director even announced that the company was prepared to invest up to 600 billion FCfa if the government would grant it the 3G licence. These are the details that are certain to grab the Cameroonian government's attention before it respond to Viettel Cameroon's request to have its 3G exclusivity extended.

BRM

Companies to make financial market bids on-line by 2015

The Cameroonian government and the Korean International Co-operation Agency (KOICA) has just started the "e-procurement" project which will introduce the use of the internet for financial market activities in Cameroon.

Through this project, which will be operational in 2015, any bidder will be able to access calls for offers to find out information about bidding guidelines and, later, send the file through the same channel.

E-procurement should increase the speed and transparency of Cameroon's public markets procedures. Minister of Financial Markets, Abba Sadou, affirms that the focus for now is putting all the procedures on-line.

Brazil 2014: Orange Cameroon spends big for Lions indomptables

“Lions today, Lions for always… We believe in the Lions”. That is the message that Orange Cameroon wanted to send to journalists gathered at the Yaoundé Golf Club on March 29, 2014. It was an opportunity for the French group to explain how Orange Cameroon hopes to support the national football team’s trip to Brazil for the 2014 World Cup, and fans.

“Orange Cameroon will be prividing Cameroonians the live broadcast of the 2014 World Cup,” said the group doing its opening statement. A partnership has been signed with the national TV station, Crtv, for this purpose. Questioned about the amount paid out to Crtv for this partnership, Orange Cameroon’s Communications Director, Samuel Ngondi Eboua, stated that the French group spent the equivalent of “what Cameroonians deserve”. Without being specific about the total cost, Ngondi nevertheless noted that, since his arrival in Cameroon in 2002, Orange Cameroon has spent 15 billion FCfa on the Lions.

Also questioned about the project on Sunday by Adèle Mballa Aangana on Crtv, the Managing Director, Amadou Vamoulké, remained discreet about the amount of money involved in the partnership with Orange Cameroon. “In a sponsorship-media relationship, it’s visibility for the sponsor and compensation for the media. What are we getting? We’re getting some money. You know, I revealed the amount paid by the government (300 million FCfa to acquire the broadcast rights) because this involved public spending and so transparency is of the utmost importance. With regards to the arrangement with partners, maybe it would be better not to make any noise. As the Cameroonian expression goes, ‘money hates noise’,” explained Vamoulké.

For Samuel Ndongi, it would be out of the question to abandon the partnership with the Lions when the team has losses.

300 MILLION FCFA

"*This is the opportunity for us to express our appreciation and gratitude to the government which enabled us to acquire these rights* […] *300 million FCfa and even more. The Cameroonian government knows what football means to it and to the Cameroonian people and has thought about it. This has always been the case. The only novelty is when, in any given year, we turn to the stock exchange. There was a time when we paid 50 million FCfa to acquire these rights. As all other international activities have been snatched away, we can hope that the World Cup is more in our grasp than the CAN (African Nations' Cup),*" states the Managing Director of Crtv.

Within the framework of this partnership with the French telecommunications group, during the next World Cup, Crtv's programmes will be in Orange Cameroon's colours. Samuel Ngondi Eboua explains that the telephone company will stay with the Lions even in the most difficult moments. He believes that "today' failures prepare tomorrow's successes." For him, it would be out of the question to abandon the partnership with the Lions when the team has losses such as the recent thrashing handed out to the Cameroonian team by Portugal in the last friendly match

Since the start of the week, World Cup promotional offers have also been made to Orange Cameroon's supporters and subscribers. Lions4life SIM cards, a best fan photo competition, SMS-based games and several other give-aways have been made since March 31, 2014. This will give subscribers the chance to win all-expense-paid trips to Brazil, plasma screen TVs, digital tablets or fan football kits. Around 10 "Lions4life" posters featuring Lions players are to be included in the various promotional campaigns.

B-O.D.

Amadou Vamoulké, Managing Director of Crtv: "*The Cameroonian government knows what football means to it and to the Cameroonian people and has thought about it. This has always been the case.*"

"THE LIONS COMMUNICATE USING OUR ORANGE NETWORK"

Communications Director at Orange Cameroon, Samuel Ngondi explains his company's support for the national team.

"*Orange Cameroon's commitment to Cameroonian football doesn't only touch the Indomitable Lions. We touch Lions in all their forms. To be honest, I can tell you that we don't necessarily get a lot of visibility from women's football, which we support, or from youth football. I am referring to the national teams of these categories which we support. And this kind of commitment doesn't only touch the issue of access rights. It affects everything. For example, we also have to support all Lions in all their forms (particularly in football). We are present in every way with the Indomitable Lions. We have partners who go there, work and the support takes many forms: there's money and there are other things. When they arrive in Cameroon, the Lions communicate through our network for the most part with a donation that will keep them at ease.*"

Cameroon starts audit of construction work for WACS submarine cable laying

The Cameroonian Minister of Postal Services and Telecommunications, Jean Pierre Biyiti bi Essam, has just made a call for tenders to recruit a firm specialised in "the financial auditing of work conducted by MTN Cameroon on the construction work carried out for the laying of West African Cable System (WACS) submarine cables in Limbe" in the South-East of the country.
This audit will aim "to verify that work conducted has been done in keeping with the amounts declared by MTN Cameroon, to ensure that the materials being used cost the prices indicated and check to see that all bills presented by MTN Cameroon are for the laying work." Applications are to be submitted to the Special Commission on Markets within the Ministry of Postal Services no later than April 10, 2014.
Built in 2012 by the MTN group, the land point for the Limbe WACS enabled connecting Cameroon to the 14,500 km fibre-optic submarine cable which stretches from Europe to Africa across the Atlantic Ocean. On November 27, 2013, MTN Cameroon handed over the structure to the Cameroonian government, transferring to the latter all ownership rights for the infrastructure.
For this, the State must reimburse all fees used in its construction by Cameroon's cellular phone market leader. The audit will therefore seek to ensure that the bill presented to the Cameroonian government is indeed accurate.

Brussels Airlines to fly with MTN Cameroon's Mobile Money

The Belgian airline, Brussels Airlines, and the leader of the Cameroonian cellular phone industry, MTN Cameroon (59% market-share with 8.7 million subscribers on December 31, 2013), just signed a partnership agreement for the purchasing of plane tickets using Mobile Money, the mobile banking service of MTN International's Cameroonian subsidiary
Brussels Airlines (300 daily flights, 70 destinations and 43 planes) is now the first airline to use the electronic payment service in Cameroon, offering customers the possibility of buying their tickets without having to go anywhere or carrying large sums of money on them to get to a travel agency.
To get the airline's customers to try-out this new service that turns your cellular phone into an electronic wallet, the two companies have announced a promotional campaign that will run until March 31, 2014, providing discounted tickets for the customers to use the service.
According to the press release issued by MTN Cameroon, MTN Mobile Money "is now used by thousands of Cameroonians to pay electricity bills, purchase phone credit, transfer funds, pay for cable TV subscriptions, as well as purchase goods and services in supermarkets and authorised department stores."

Cameroon: companies to pay their income taxes via cell phone

Making reference to the innovations being implemented in 2014 by the Cameroon Tax Office at the last GICAM debate dinner, the Director General of Income Taxes (DGI), Modeste Mopa Fatoing, announced that companies will now be able to pay their income taxes using Mobile Money, the cellular phone-based payment system provided by MTN Cameroon.
According to the DGI, "this service will allow companies to pay their income taxes without leaving their offices or having to contact tax office agents." This will save time and will no doubt help to increase the number of users of the cell-phone-based payment system being promoted by mobile telephone operators.
On January 28, 2013 in Douala, Orange Cameroun's senior management had revealed that the Orange Money service, previously launched in September 2011, already had 700,000 users nationwide. This figure is likely to explode now with the number of promotions recently offered by mobile phone operators to get their customers to sign-up for cellular phone-based payment services.

ENERGY

Addax Petroleum extends Atwood Aurora's offshore drilling contract

Atwood Oceanics Inc., an offshore drilling company based in Houston in the USA, announced on February 20, 2014 that it will be extending the drilling contract of one of its subsidiaries with Addax Petroleum Cameroon Ltd, for the Atwood Aurora jack-up oil platform.
The one-year contract period for offshore drilling in Cameroon has now been extended to two years with a daily fee of 185,000 USD (around 92.5 million FCfa), including the Cameroon State's 15% tax, or 158,000 USD (around 79 million FCfa) before tax, depending on the location of the well.
The contract will begin in July 2014 and will end, if completed on time, in July 2016.
Listed on the New-York Stock Exchange (NYSE), Atwood Oceanics Inc. is an offshore drilling contractor in the natural gas and oil sector. Founded in 1968, it has 13 mobile offshore drilling units and has three deep water platforms currently under construction.

Gaz du Cameroun increases production

Gaz du Cameroun (GDC) increased its production by 0.6 mmscf/d reaching 3.2 mmscf/d in February 2014. This was revealed by parent company, Victoria Oil & Gas Plc (VOG), on February 21.
This growth in production, from its October 2013 2.6 mmscf/d level, was possible due to an increase in demand and the modifications made to supply gas to Socaver, the cylinder manufacturer and subsidiary of the country's largest beer manufacturer, Société anonyme des brasseries du Cameroun (SABC).
"*After major adjustments within the VOG and GDC, we have seen a real increase in the volume of gas provided. Attaining operational profitability is also an important step and we hope to benefit from this new dynamic,*" Kevin Foo, CEO of Victoria Oil & Gas Plc.
Victoria Oil & Gas Plc is a prospecting company in gas and oil production with most of its assets in the Logbaba gas field in Cameroon and also in West Medvezhye oil and gas projects in Russia.

Sterling Energy to leave Cameroon if oil search on Ntem block turns-up dry

The Bamboo-1 oil well's successful drilling on the Ntem block "will transform" Sterling Energy Plc, the company listed on the London stock exchange. This was the outlook expressed by the upstream oil and gas company in its preliminary 2013 report published on March 17, 2014.
Sterling is warning that it will focus on its projects in Madagascar and Somaliland, or will seek other ventures "*if the well fails to find commercial hydrocarbon fuels.*" The company, which has a 50% stake in the Ntem block beside Murphy Oil, affirms "*having funds*" for this purpose.
Bamboo-1 is aiming to find 450 million barrels of oil equivalent and is the first well in that area. Considered to be quite vast, the Ntem block is located between Tertiary and upper Cretaceous systems which have already yielded satisfactory finds in Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea.

Caracal Energy out of Canada to raise transit fees for Chadian oil in Cameroon

The Canadian company, Caracal Energy Inc, holder of a production sharing contract on the Mangara/Badila blocks in Chad, announced on March 24, 2014, the loading of the first export cargo of 950,000 barrels of oil from the Badila field at the Komé terminal in Kribi. Listed on the London Stock Exchange, the oil company confirms having 560,000 barrels of the total amount, the remainder going to the Glencore Xtrata plc trading company.
The first export shipment by Caracal Energy is excellent news for the Cameroonian authorities who have been receiving considerable sums of revenue from transit royalties on Chadian oil in Cameroon. Since October 29, 2013, the fee has been adjusted from 195 FCfa (0.41 USD) per barrel to 618 FCfa (1.30 USD). The total amount for the transit fee imposed on the Canadian company working in Chad's oil fields could gradually rise due to the increase in oil production anticipated by Caracal.
In the month of March 2014, the Badila field's production reached 14,100 barrels of oil per day, a sizable increase from the 12,000 barrels per day recorded on January 20, 2014. Production will increase in the months to come due to the expansion of production processing facilities and also the shipment planned by the oil and gas company, Caracal, for the third quarter.
Caracal Energy Inc is very active in Chad. In 2011, it signed a production sharing agreement with the government granting it and its partners exclusive rights to explore and develop the reserves and resources in a 26,103 km2 area in southern Chad.
Aside from Caracal Energy, which will be increasing the Cameroonian Treasury's revenue with Chadian oil transit royalty payments, other oil companies in Chad have been announced as future users of the Chad-Cameroon pipeline. According to the National Hydrocarbons Company (SNH), which has been leading the negotiations, British company, Griffiths, China Petroleum and the government of Niger are all planning to use the Chad-Cameroon pipeline.

BRM

Cameroun makes 180° turn-around on pipeline construction project for oil product distribution

On March 18, 2014, the Cameroonian Prime Minister, Philémon Yang, issued a press release regarding the decision taken on February 21, 2014. The announcement reported that the June 13, 2013 call for tenders made by the Ministry of Energy and Water, in terms of conceptualisation, financing, construction and use of a pipeline for oil product distribution between Limbe, Douala, Edea and Yaoundé was not successful.
The motivation behind this about-face between the February 21 decision and that of March 18 has not been explained. However, only 24 hours after the government's sudden flip-flop, representatives of the 3PL (Petroleum Products Pipeline) consortium that had signed an MOU with the Cameroonian government, were received by the Ministry of Energy and Water, Basile Atangana Kouna.
According to reliable sources, at this meeting, the consortium 3PL reiterated its commitment to the project's completion "despite initial difficulties". Indeed, in August 2013, the consortium had announced that it had successfully landed the 248 km pipeline construction project that will connect towns in Limbé (south-west), Douala (coastal area), Edéa (coastal area) and Yaoundé (centre), in order to facilitate oil product distribution.
Meanwhile, the American company, Govind, was chosen to build a 377 km pipeline to connect Limbé (south-west) in Bafoussam (west) and Bamenda (north-west).

The environmental management plan for the Mentchum Dam will cost 1.12 billion

Enplan Group and Mentchum Power Project PLC have just announced that they have won the deal "for the overall implementation of the environmental and social management for the Mentchum Dam's construction in the North-West of Cameroon." The pair outdid the Safege, Safege Afrique central and JMN to win the deal.
According to the press release announcing the results of the call for tenders for this contract published by the Cameroonian Ministry of Public Contracts, Abba Sadou, the deal is worth 1.12 billion FCfa. The timeline for completing the project is set at five years.
The Mentchum Dam will have a production capacity of 450 MW. The energy generator will cost around 500 billion FCfa. The MOU for the project was signed on November 29, 2012 between the Cameroonian government and the British group, Joule Africa which will be doing the construction. The project involves the building of a 72 km energy evacuation line between Wum and Bamenda.

MINING

Noble Resources to buy first ten years of iron production from Mbalam-Nabeba ore

Sundances Resources, the parent company of Cam Iron and Congo Iron, companies leading the Mblam-Nabeba iron ore development project, spread-out between eastern Cameroon and the Congo, announced on March 25, 2014 that it has signed a contractual agreement with Noble Resources International to purchase the Mbalam-Nabeba ore's production for the first ten years.

However, specified the press release sent to Sundance Resources, the portion of production affected by the newly inked agreement excludes the portion of production reserved for project partners. Their share will not exceed 50% of total production.

For Giulio Casello, Managing Director of Sundance Resources, with this contract, the Australian Junior Minister hopes to convince financial partners to raise financing for the construction of infrastructure such as the mine itself, the Mbalam-Kribi railway for the products removal from the site, and the iron berth for the Kribi deep water port for storage prior to export.

According to Sundance Resources, this exclusive sales contract is an important step in the Mbalam-Nabeba project and testifies to the confidence placed in the project by the Noble Resources partner which has assured the Australian firm of its desire to contribute, as much as possible, to the development and completion of this wonderful project.

Aside from the signing of the above-mentioned contract, the ore's potential and the investment opportunities it provides will be presented on March 25, 2014 in Hong Kong, China during a mining sector meeting entitled "Mines and Money". In the space of one month, this will be the second marketing event related to the Mbalam project after the "China Iron Ore Conference" held on February 25-26, 2014 in Beijing.

BRM

"If the price of iron goes up, the State will bring in more income tax"*

Serge Yanic Nana, Chairman and CEO of FINANCIA Capital, Lead Advisor & Financial Advisor of the Cameroonian government's Mbalam iron project explains if Cameroon's royalties will increase when production begins, following the signing of an agreement between Sundance and Noble which plans to buy the iron produced by Sundance at standard international rates.

"(…) Cameroon's 2.5% in royalties are based on the Cameroonian Mining Code relative to the "ore mine" price calculated based in turn on the Kribi FOB price. But the importance of indexing the price per tonne on the Platts goes far beyond the question of royalties, because, if the price of iron goes up, then Cam Iron's profit margins will be greater and so the State will bring in a lot more corporate tax revenue than expected and more dividends on its capital investment. One should note that all infrastructures return to State ownership after 25 years.

Serge Yanic Nana: "*The project's complexity lies in the structuring and building of rail and port infrastructure to keep logistical costs below $30/tonne in order to make Cameroonian and Congolese iron truly competitive.*"

The purchase contract signed by Cam Iron is based on the reference index Platts IODEX 62% Fe CFR North China, which is an international index used in iron trading. The price includes freight costs for delivery to northern China with a cargo fee standardisation at Qingdao Port in China.

HOW WILL THE KRIBI FOB PRICE BE DETERMINED IN CAMEROON?

The Platts IODEX 62% also defines delivery norms in terms of iron quality with regards to chemical and physical components.
It is based on this price that freight costs are determined to set the Kribi FOB price in Cameroon. The current Lolabé (Kribi) freight cost for northern China is around $25 to $30 with the particularity that freight costs are only influenced by the supply and demand of the ships. The BIMCO index (Baltic and International Maritime Council) is the reference for freight costs and can vary up or down by 30% from one year to the next. The $63/tonne simulation to which you referred is a pessimistic scenario which tested the project's capacity to resist the shock due to lower iron prices and, in this hypothetical context, the Mbalam project remained strong, because it has competitive logistical and transport costs.

Serge Yanik Nana: "African deposits that are to emerge in the medium term will be attractive in terms of mineral quality and logistical cost."

The Mbalam project will therefore be bankable if global iron prices were ever to fall to $90 or even $80/tonne, which is reassuring to lenders. The State's revenue will vary depending on global prices (as is the case for all natural resources).

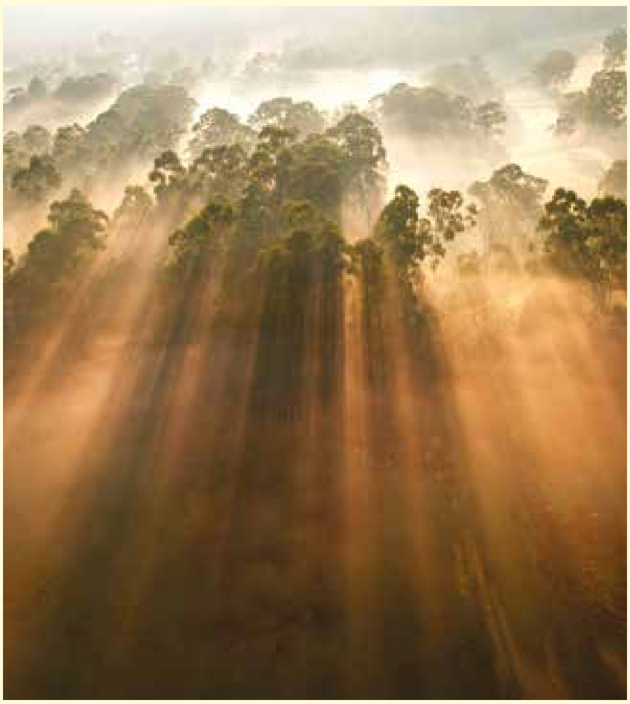
THERE'S ALSO THE RAILWAY EQUATION…

The project's complexity lies in the structuring and building of rail and port infrastructure to keep logistical costs below $30/tonne in order to make Cameroonian and Congolese iron truly competitive. The project is more one of infrastructure than mining as the latter aspect is easily addressed.
Iron is currently priced at $116/tonne. In its report, the Australian Bureau of Resources and Energy Economics, which is the Australian government's strategic think-tank on energy and mining matters projected short and medium term iron pricing declining to 109/t due to increased production. African deposits that are to emerge in the medium term will be attractive in terms of mineral quality and logistical cost. Mbalam is one of them. (…)"

Interview by
Beaugas-Orain Djoyum

*See the complete interview at www.agenceecofin.com

East Cameroon mining companies accused of illegally exploiting forests



Following an on-site visit at the Lom et Djerem department mines in East Cameroon, heads of the department's mining delegation discovered that some mining companies were engaging in illegality in the sense that some of their activities were not declared and were contrary to the regulations in effect in Cameroon.

This takes the form of the illegal cutting of trees. These mining companies readily cut trees in and even outside of the perimeter of their approved mining area. Yet, Cameroonian regulation states that this activity requires prior authorisation from the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife, which itself organises "timber salvaging" from which the wood is auctioned

However, mining companies are not the only ones in this situation. One can recall, in October 2013, during a visit to the Memvé'élé Dam construction site in the South by the Minister of Forestry himself during which the Sinohydro company was found to be in clear violation by cutting trees. Ngollé Philip Ngwesse was surprised to see scattered here and there on the property large quantities of timber though the department had granted no such authorisation, neither had it approved timber salvaging to be done on the site. The Minister had decided to auction the wood, but not without reminding heads of the Chinese company about the legal framework in place governing forestry in Cameroon.

More than 1,090 new mining permits handed out in East Cameroon since the start of 2014

The Eastern Region's Mining Delegation, Cameroon's mining region, indicates that companies in that area mine mainly gold, generating, through various taxes, approximately 1.2 billion FCfa in 2014. This was revealed during a recent visit paid by government officials to mining sites in the Lom et Djerem department.

In this eastern department alone, where there are officially 30 mining companies, 1,090 new permits have been issued to mining operators since the start of 2014, generating a total of 87 million FCfa in public revenue.

Besides gold, which is the most mined mineral by small scale entities in this part of Cameroon, the region is home to the Mbalam iron deposits, Lomié's nickel and cobalt ore and Mobilong's diamonds which, respectively, have "world class" potential, according to experts. However, their development has been on hold for eons now.

INDUSTRY

Cameroon rubber exports to China fall by 43% since January 2014

According to Commodafrica, Cameroon's natural rubber exports to China reached 441 tonnes in the first two months of 2014. Exports are down though compared to the same period last year. With 441 tonnes, Cameroon is, however, the 3rd African rubber supplier to China.
Côte d'Ivoire comes out on top with 1,683 tonnes exported to China between January and February 2014 – a 186% increase compared to the same period last year. Next comes 482 tonnes which is down by 0.41%, according to our sources.
With 403 tonnes of rubber exported to China (-31%), Nigeria is in 4th place, but far ahead of Liberia which also supplied China with rubber during the same period; up by only 35 tonnes. In total, China imported 534,065 tonnes of rubber in the first two months of 2014.

Trade between Cameroon and Morocco reached 25.5 billion FCfa in 2013

According the Moroccan Delegate Minister of Industry, Foreign Trade, Investment and Digital Economy, Mohamed Abbou, trade between Morocco and Cameroon reached 51 million dollars (approximately 25.5 billion FCfa) in 2013, compared to 24.2 million dollars (around 12 billion FCfa) in 2007. This marks a 100% increase in 6 years.
However, "trade, which remains largely undiversified, remains beneath the potential and ambition of each country," explained the above-mentioned cabinet member of the Moroccan government, quoted in Le Matin in New York.
Mr Mohamed Abbou indicates that Moroccan imports from Cameroon are limited to wood, cotton, fresh bananas, coffee and cocoa, while exports to Cameroon comprise three groups: paper and cardboard, electrical machinery as well as technical appliances and fertiliser.

Two Moroccan-Cameroonian business centres will be created in Douala and Casablanca

On March 26, 2014 in Casablanca, the economic capital of Morocco, the Cameroon Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mining and Craft (CCIMA), represented by its president, Christophe Eken, and the Moroccan Exporters Association (Asmex), have signed a framework agreement that aims to create two Moroccan-Cameroonian business centres in Douala and Casablanca.
The two structures plan to boost economic cooperation between the two countries. The CAMC that will be created in Casablanca and Douala will have two missions, "to support and collaborate on public or private initiatives aiming to promote commercial and economic exchanges between Morocco and Cameroon to initiate partnerships between the companies of both countries to gather, establish and manage business relations."
According to Mohamed Abbou, the Moroccan Delegate Minister of Foreign Trade , trade between Morocco and Cameroon was 25.5 billion FCfa in 2013, but remains far below the potential of both countries. The government member suggests that "among the sectors where trade can be consolidated are construction and agro-foods," where trade between Cameroon and Morocco "can reach 80 million dollars (around 40 billion FCfa)".

Leader of the month

Charles Booto à Ngon: the guardian of norms and standards

The Director General of the Quality and Standards Agency (ANOR) indicated on April 4, 2014 that the small bags of whisky sold on the country's streets will be banned.

Much to the dismay of companies such as Fermencam, Adic, Sofavinc and Soprolvin and another ten or so companies that make more than half of their revenue through the sale of bags of whisky, the alcoholic bagged beverages will no longer be sold in Cameroon. In short, the 5cl Kitoko and Lion d'or bags sold by the road side for 100 FCfa will soon be banned.

A new form of whisky manufacturing has been set by Charles Booto à Ngon, Director General of the Quality and Standards Agency (ANOR) on April 4, 2014. The ANOR Director General gathered sector entities to present to them the new norm entitled *"NC210: 2014-48 revision 1"* that will be mandatory after the signing of the joint order issued by the Ministers of Industry, Trade and Public Health.

The ANOR's decision is the outcome of a long process which began a few weeks ago with the setting up of the Technical Committee on Spirits which included members of that sector. In order to respond favourably to the national community's concerns about the dubious quality of the bagged beverages, particular the social damage apparent in town and village populations, a study was conducted in the field

and in laboratories. The results? Bagged whisky manufacturers use methanol instead of the ethanol prescribed by the Prime Minister; one finds alcohol levels surpassing 40%. More than 40 different brands are on the Cameroonian market. The majority of these brands produce these whiskies clandestinely.

The ANOR's decision is the outcome of a long process which began a few weeks ago with the setting up of the Technical Committee on Spirits which included members of that sector.

CAMEROON, REFUGE

The new norm that seeks to correct these lacks incorporates into the category of spirits those liquors that are produced through small scale methods and bagged whisky. In addition, *"today, the revised standard requires that whiskies can no longer be packaged in plastic bags. This will be mandatory with the issuance of an order that will be signed by competent authorities, particularly the Ministry of Industry (Ministry of Mining, Industry and Technological Development),"* explains Charles Booto à Ngon on a National Postal Service broadcast.

For him, *"bagged whisky is banned in Gabon and in all neighbouring countries [...]. It is also banned in Kenya, but all the manufacturers in Kenya and not necessarily African stormed Cameroon, where the market enabled them to produce bagged whisky once again."* This is why it is vital that we clean up the sector and protect the health of the Cameroonian people.

The Director General's decision on February 4, 2010 provoked debates both within the sector and across the general population. The joint ministerial order will put an end to the debate. Officials at ANOR remain confident that the new standard will take effect for the well-being and good health of the people.

Almost a year ago, in the margins of an ANOR board meeting, the Chairman of the Board, Mohamadou Bayero Fadil, stated that ANOR was able to develop and standardise almost 513 standards in its two years of existence. *"This is a virtual feat for the management team which never gave up, despite the constant challenges,"* he remarked.

ANOR is an administrative public establish created by presidential decree No. 2009/296 17th September 2009. It is managed by Charles Booto à Ngon, its first Director General. In collaboration with affected public and private organisations, ANOR aims to contribute to the development and implementation of government policies in the area of quality and standards in Cameroon. It also oversees the certification and evaluation of adherence to standards and norms.

Beaugas-Orain Djoyum


Make the news
yourself
www.ecofinagency.com/com
The News
FINANCIAL REPORT
ECOFIN
AGENCY
F12
Google
news