

BUSINESS IN CAMEROON

MAJOR PROJECTS
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FINANCE

Seven Cameroonians who are excelling in international institutions

Albert Zeufack, Vera Songwe,
René Awambeng, Célestin Monga,
Constant Aimé Lonkeng Nguana,
Janvier Litse, Emmanuel Noubissie Ngankam



For Alamine Ousmane Mey,
the State must cut back
on the spending



Interview with Modeste
Mopa Fatoing, MD of Inland
Revenue Service



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For the pride of the country

Cameroon does not only attract foreign investors to the country, its cadres are inversely attracted by competitive careers at the international level. Discrete and efficient, some young Cameroonians have been shining in global organisations for over a decade. Though many often apply of their own volition, the State of Cameroon gets fully involved by guaranteeing some candidates deemed credible. For the country's and applicants' pride. Thus, a bevy of Cameroonian cadres and technocrats proudly represent their flag outside their country: in Europe, America, but especially in European and African financial institutions. They work for the World Bank, IMF (International Monetary Fund), Bretton Woods institutions just as much as they excel at AfDB (African Development Bank), Afreximbank, or IFC (International Financial Company), the subsidiary of the World Bank specialised in financing the private sector. Among them, eight leaders fly high the Cameroonian label and represent precious financing centres for projects at the international level and in Cameroon. We wish to reveal them to you in this edition of *Business in Cameroon*. If the country of the *Indomitable Lions* is represented by worthy ambassadors of Cameroonian finance abroad, Cameroon is also modernising itself from within. The country is refining and perfecting its tax system and letting everyone know about it, through the most authorised voice: the Managing Director of the Inland Revenue Service. In an expansive interview, he

expounded in our columns on the new provisions in the 2017 Finance bill of the State of Cameroon. The digitalisation of several procedures will thus enable the payment of the road worthiness tax for 2017 through the insurance counter and cancel the need to affix said licence to car vehicle wind-screens. This is just one of the numerous measures to discover in your magazine. Another revolution implemented by the government: the approval of the single manual of procedures to monitor public investments, for the benefit of the population and investors. Upstream, it is meant to reign in the deficit and operations of the State to fulfill commitments made to the IMF. To tackle the crisis, Cameroon is simultaneously getting an important hydroelectric potential through Lom Pangar, Memve'ele, Mekin dams and other projects under construction.

The ICT sector is far from being neglected in this edition of *Invest in Cameroon*. It is an open section offering a wealth of opportunities, all equally profitable. Cameroon keeps on expanding its connections to the MAC universe (Mobile Account Connected), another way of transferring money by telephone via simplified bank cards.

Last but not least, the entire *Business in Cameroon* team join me in extending our congratulations to the Indomitable Lions, and praise their run during the 2017 AfCON in Gabon. This was once again an admirable way of raising the Cameroonian flag abroad...

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THE CAST



**JACQUELINE
KOUNG À
BESSIKÉ**

The programme to reform in the management of the Cameroonian property system will get a boost during 2017. Indeed, defending the budget of her Ministry in front of the Finance Commission in Parliament, the Minister of Properties, Land Registry and Land Affairs, Jacqueline Koung à Bessiké, announced that an envelope of FCfa 6.8 billion (just over 25% of the global budget of this ministry) will be dedicated to the ongoing reforms.

These investments, she specified, will be mainly used to set up a digital technical infrastructure leading to the densification of the national geodetic network; the modernisation of the investigations and building the capacities of the agents in charge managing land and property issues in the country. In Cameroon, the management of land and property affairs is still facing some difficulties, with corruption of the agents in charge far from being the least.



**PATRICE
MELOM**

On 1 December 2016, during a meeting with the head of the European Union delegation in Cameroon, Françoise Collet, the Managing Director of the Autonomous Port of Kribi, Patrice Melom, revealed that the first commercial ship will berth in the deep water port of Kribi before the end of March 2017. The biggest port infrastructure even built in the country, the deep water port of Kribi, in South-Cameroon, is not yet in operation, while the works for the construction of its first phase (protection dyke, container terminal and multi-purpose terminal, port warehousing equipment, water and electricity conveyance, service road, etc.) have been completed for a year.

The delays incurred in completing the administrative procedures which should result in making this port operational are at the original of this halt, we learned from good sources. This has been the case, for example, for the signing of contracts with the concessionaires who will operate the two terminals, which has been expected for months now.



**JACQUIS
KEMLEU
TCHABGOU**

Centre technique de l'agro-alimentaire du Cameroun (CTA-CAM; Cameroon Food Industry Technical Centre). This is the name of the future analysis centre for processed food industry products, which was just created in Cameroon. This was at the end of a Founding General Meeting in which took part industrialists, representatives of the government, European Union and the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO), all partners in this project.

This structure, whose operation process was kickstarted, will mainly oversee the application and respect of the standards established in the country in terms of food industry, before the different products are available on the market. Managed by the private sector, CTA-CAM, whose Steering Committee will be chaired by the General Secretary of the Association of Oleaginous Refiners in Cameroon (ASROC), Jacques Kemleu Tchabgou, is planning to improve the competitiveness of the Cameroonian companies and guarantee food safety in the country.



**JEAN KISITO
MVOGO**

During a meeting with the Minister of Mining, in which he led a delegation of experts from the International Kimberly Process Committee undertaking an assessment mission in Cameroon, Jena Kisito Mvogo, National Permanent Secretary of the Kimberly Process in the country, rejected the accusations of Central African diamond smuggling levelled against Cameroon by Partnership Africa Canada (PAC).

Mr Mvogo did not however provide any details to substantiate his position on PAC investigation published on 2 December 2016, which presents Cameroon as a hub for illegal trade of Central African blood diamonds. Entitled *"From conflict to Illicit: Mapping the diamond trade from Central African Republic to Cameroon"*, this report reveals that *"Cameroon allows conflict diamonds from the Central African Republic to cross its borders and enter the legal supply chain, due to the low numbers of checks, smuggling and corruption"*.



**EMMANUEL DE
TAILLY**

A Société Anonyme des Brasseries du Cameroun (SABC) Board Meeting held in Paris on 7 December 2016, appointed Emmanuel de Tailly as Managing Director of this company. He replaces Francis Batista, who in 2013, succeeded to Cameroonian André Siaka at the head of this subsidiary of the French group Castel. Emmanuel de Tailly, who was Regional Director – Indian Ocean for the Castel Group and Deputy CEO of Brasseries Star, in Madagascar, officially assumed office as head of the company leader in the brewery market in Cameroon in January 2017.

Through this appointment, the new director will find himself in a country where he resided between 2000 and 2003, when he was Regional Director – Central Africa for Maersk. The new MD of Brasseries du Cameroun has 12 years of experience in total within the Castel group. He was successively Managing Director of Brasseries du Tchad, Togo and RDC.



**VINCENT
BOLLORÉ**

After the closure, some years ago of the cinemas Le Wouri and Le Paradis, Douala, the economic capital of Cameroon, has a new cinema and theatre hall since 18 January 2017. Christened Canal Olympia and built in the Bessengué neighbourhood, this cinema and theatre hall is the second in the network of the same name in Cameroon, after the one inaugurated on 14 June 2016 in the capital of the country, specifically in the campus of the Yaoundé I University. Built by the French group Vivendi, owned by industrialist Vincent Bolloré, the Canal Olympia cinemas *"offer 18 cinema sessions per week, 6 days a week, with screening movies often being released simultaneously in France. Three sessions will be dedicated every week to a kid's movie and a full day will be reserved every month for African cinema and Nollywood. Concerts from African and international artists are also scheduled for the next stage"*.

Cameroonian Stars in the constellation of international institutions

In the 70-80's, Cameroon was known for its Makossa, a local musical rhythm, exported to Africa and even Europe by talented homegrown artist-musicians. And then came the 90's. With the fabulous saga of the Indomitable Lions, national football team of Cameroon, at the World Cup organised in Italy in the month of June 1990.

Since that time, and despite the current lacklustre performances of our national team, the mention of

there is of course the great Manu Dibango, but also the Richard Bona and others Jean Dikoto Mandengué, who have managed to make the whole world believe, in recent years, that the bass guitar was invented in Cameroon, such is their command of this musical instrument.

However, far from the exposure offered by a football stadium, a concert of music in a prestigious performance hall or a televised interview, there are many other Cameroonians

sadors of Cameroon. Through their respective talents. By their careers, sometimes unique or dotted with setbacks, but generally crowned with success. In the end.

Outlining the careers of ten of them is the purpose of the present offering. On top of all being Cameroonians, they have in common the fact of working in lending institutions of the African or world economy. Evidently, this selection could not be exhaustive, since it is only the outcome of certain favourable circumstances.

Indeed, aside from Célestin Monga, whose name certainly recalls the so-called "burning" years in Cameroon, economists such as René Awambeng or also Constant Aimé Lonkeng Ngouana were until now unknown to the general public. It is only due to their recent appointments to strategic positions, in Afreximbank and the IMF that they were thrust under our modest spotlight.

Indeed, aside from Célestin Monga, whose name certainly recalls the so-called "burning" years in Cameroon, economists such as René Awambeng or also Constant Aimé Lonkeng Ngouana were until now unknown to the general public.

the name Cameroon under other skies inevitably recalls names such as Roger Milla or again Samuel Eto'o. Alongside these legends of football,

who equally represent the national flag with dignity. Sometimes unknown to their compatriots, they are none the less important ambas-

Brice R. Mbodiam

Albert Zeufack, the Africa region strategist of the World Bank

Last year, the Vice-President of the World Bank for the Africa region, Senegalese Makhtar Diop, appointed Cameroonian Albert G. Zeufack to the position of Chief Economist for the Africa region. This economist who was selected at the end of a very competitive process, specified the World Bank, officially assumed his new duties on 1 May 2016.

Mr. Zeufack joined the World Bank in January 1997. Since then, we learn, he has held different positions, including through external collaboration. It is on this basis that he was, between 2008 and 2012, Director of Research and Investment for Khazanah Nasional Berhad, a sovereign fund based in Kuala Lumpur, in Malaysia. According to the explanations of the

World Bank, in the position of Chief Economist for the Africa region, *"the first three priorities of Mr Zeufack will be to provide intellectual and strategic orientation for analytical work at the national and sectorial level in the Africa region; supervise production and diffusion of cutting-edge regional research; and collaborate with external partners on the regional research programme"*.

Holder of a doctorate in Economics from the university of Clermont-Ferrand, Albert G. Zeufack then taught economics and applied econometrics in this French university institution. Member of the Consultative Council on Governance of Natural Resources and the Network of the United Nations on Sustainable Development this



Holder of a doctorate in Economics from the university of Clermont-Ferrand, Albert G. Zeufack then taught economics and applied econometrics in this French university institution.

Cameroonian economist has several publications to his name in university journals.

Vera Songwe switches seat at the WB and becomes Resident Representative of the IFC in Senegal



During the year 2016, Vera Songwé had a meeting at the Ministry of Urban Development and Housing in Cameroon.

During the year 2016, Vera Songwé had a meeting at the Ministry of Urban Development and Housing in Cameroon. Not as an ordinary citizen, but in her capacity as Resident Representative of the International Finance Corporation (IFC), she came to present to the authorities of her country the opportunities that this branch of the World Bank, specially dedicated to financing the private sector, offers.

Director of Operations of the World Bank for Senegal, Cape Verde, the Gambia, Guinea-Bissau and Mauritania, from 2011, Vera Songwé moved to the IFC in the second half of 2015. This Cameroonian economist has thus resurged after, we learn, the Senegalese authorities

expressed disagreement to her extension in the position of Director of Operations for the World Bank. Indeed, the Senegalese press reveals, relations between Vera Songwé and the Senegalese authorities were no longer very cordial.

In her new position, even if she continues to collaborate with government authorities, Vera Songwé, who no longer keeps an eye on the management of Senegalese public finances, now has the private sector as principal interlocutor. Joining the World Bank in 1998 in a managerial position in the East Asia and Pacific region, this Cameroonian has for a long time featured in the Choiseul ranking of *"African leaders of tomorrow"*.

Headhunted from Ecobank group, René Awambeng now works for Afreximbank

The African Import-Export Bank, headquartered in Cairo, Egypt, announced on 14 December 2016 the appointment of Cameroonian René Awambeng as Director, Client Relations (Headquarters and Branches). Until his appointment, we learned, Mr Awambeng was Group Head, Global Corporates, Corporate and Investment Bank at Ecobank Transnational Incorporated (ETI) in Paris, France.

He held this position from July 2014, having previously been in Nigeria between 2012 and 2014. Graduate in Arts and Letters from the University of Yaoundé, the main university institution in his country; then holder of an MBA from the University of Nottingham in the UK, René Awambeng is leaving the Ecobank group where he has

served for 14 years.

Fourteen years of rich experience, during which René Awambeng successively occupied positions of Group Head, Commodity Finance, Corporate and Investment Banking in London; Executive Director and Managing Director of Ecobank Rwanda Ltd; Project Director of Ecobank Zimbabwe; Executive Director and Managing Director of Ecobank DRC...

The Cameroonian banker will now apply his immense skill to the development and promotion of intra-African commerce, which is the credo of Afreximbank. Specifically, within this Pan-African institution, which claims investments of more than FCfa 175 billion in Cameroon, Mr. Awambeng will lead "the implementation of Afreximbank's business strategies,



Graduate in Arts and Letters from the University of Yaoundé, the main university institution in his country; then holder of an MBA from the University of Nottingham in the UK, René Awambeng left the Ecobank group.

notably management of the delivery of Bank products to the clientele and management of Afreximbank branch office operations. He will also oversee management of relations with governments at branch office level".

Célestin Monga promoted to the Vice-Presidency of the AfDB, after a spell at UNIDO



The African Development Bank (AfDB) announced on 10 July 2016, the appointment of Cameroonian economist Célestin Monga to

the position of Vice-President in charge of Economic Governance and Knowledge Management of this Pan-African financial institution. Mr. Monga held the position until now, and this since the end of 2014, of Deputy Director General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO).

But it is at the World Bank, where he spent about 20 years, that this economist started his career in international financial institutions. Before that, Célestin Monga worked in the banking sector in Cameroon, and was discovered by the general public through an open letter addressed to the public authorities, correspond-

ence which moreover resulted in legal problems for him in 1990. Exiled in the United States, Célestin Monga, who had previously studied in France, then enriched his curriculum at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and at Harvard. Author of several books and editor of the part devoted to economics in the New Encyclopedia of Africa (2007), Célestin Monga lectured at Boston University, in the United States and at the University of Bordeaux in France.

Constant Aimé Lonkeng Ngouana, IMF representative in Jamaica



Specialist in econometrics and international economics, Cameroonian Constant Aimé Lonkeng Ngouana officially assumed duty last year in Kingston, the capital of Jamaica, in the capacity of the IMF Resident Representative in this country. Joining the IMF in 2010, this Mathematics Graduate of the University of Yaoundé; holder of a Masters in International Economics from the University of Louvain, in Belgium; and a PhD from the

University of Montreal, Canada; has successively served in the Africa and Fiscal Affairs departments of this international financial institution. C'est à ce titre que l'ancien cadre de l'Institut national de la statistique (INS) du Cameroun, par ailleurs enseignant à l'Université de Montréal, officiera d'ailleurs, au cours de la période 2014-2015, en qualité d'économiste chargé des questions fiscales du FMI pour l'Indonésie.

It is in this capacity that the former cadre of the National Institute of Statistics (INS) in Cameroon, then lecturer at the University of Montreal, worked moreover, during the period 2014-2015, as economist in charge of fiscal questions of the IMF for Indonesia.

Janvier Litse heads the West Africa Regional Office of the AfDB

Since 24 November 2016, Cameroonian Janvier Litse is the Director General of the West Africa Regional Office of the AfDB, Pan-African banking institution where he has worked for 24 years. In the past, he held several positions of responsibility, including that of Interim Vice-President of Operations, between 2011 and 2012, and in 2014 until his appointment.

Commenting on his appointment, the President of the AfDB, Nigerian Akinwumi Adesina, expressed himself in these terms in Abidjan: "Mr. Janvier Litse has deep experience across all the activities of the Bank and has shown remarkable leadership over the years. He is a great asset for



Janvier Litse held several positions of responsibility, including that of Interim Vice-President of Operations, between 2011 and 2012, and in 2014 until his appointment.

the Bank and an excellent manager of staff and operations. I am delighted that he will lead the implementation of the new Regional West Africa Business and Delivery of Services Office. He is highly respected by stakeholders".

Emmanuel Noubissie Ngankam, former journalist excels in Bretton Woods



For some months, the ex-President of the Association of Economic Journalists of Cameroon (AJEC), Emmanuel Noubissie Ngankam, has returned to the World Bank headquarters in Washington, in the capacity of Deputy Director of Operations for Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire and Togo. For more than 3 years, he was first in the field, where he held, from 2013 the position of the World Bank Resident Representative in Algeria, after a highly competitive selection process.

An economist by training, this former employee of the CFAO group has had a multidimensional professional career in Cameroon. But, he was discovered by the public at large through his journalism, a job for which he says he had a passion. Before rejoining the World Bank in 2001, where he worked on projects such as the Chad-Cameroon pipeline, Emmanuel Noubissie Ngankam was the Representative of the Friedrich Hebert Foundation (1996 and 1998), then Special Adviser to the President of GICAM, the most important employer grouping in Cameroon.

Modeste Mopa Fatoing

“We are working on dematerializing processes and deeds to curb fraud”

Here, the Director General of Taxation explains some of the new measures integrated in Cameroon's 2017 Finance Law.

Business in Cameroon: What do you, as director general of taxation, think of the reforms newly introduced in the 2017 finance act of Cameroon?

Modeste Mopa Fatoing: Let me first reassure you. The 2017 finance act, just as those that preceded it, has been designed following the President's directives. These mainly include focusing on a fiscal policy which prioritizes a broad tax base and protects the most disadvantaged social groups, without however affecting market prices of essential products. Meanwhile, the other directive given by the Head of State regarding the new finance law is making fiscal administration more efficient, by developing more modern procedures that do not impose additional charges to tax-payers. The newly

introduced measures respect these guidelines, at least in regards to taxes and I personally think they will do a lot of good.

BC: Concerning these measures, could you enlighten us more about those related to the vehicle tax or vignette? Everyone is wondering why associate only the vignette to insurance, and not taxes such as the axle tax?

MMF: The amendment to the collection process of the vignette is rooted in a number of remarks. First is that acquiring the items cost the State much money. As you probably know, each year, the State orders these vignettes or tax stickers abroad. Secondly, there was a risk of fraud which could not be ignored. Thirdly, when they come to the tax office, delay in issuing

them to car and bike owners often caused long queues.

So we pondered on how to overcome these shortcomings. We therefore decided to use the model of airlines for collecting airport stamps as it has proven to be successful. You may remember that a little more than two years ago, we decided to include the price of these stamps in the flight ticket's price. Since then, there are no more long queues at airport desks to pay the item. We thus decided to do the same for vignettes (with their tariffs unchanged), including them in the insurance premium.

We are tackling many issues. We are trying to reduce tax cost, by suppressing the vignette purchase procedure; we are also fighting fraud while working on boosting our revenues;



Modeste Mopa Fatoing, Director General of Taxation: "Therefore, when the time comes we will proceed to controls with the insurance companies, in order to make sure that all tax payers owing the vignette pay what is due."

we make life easier for tax payers by sparing them long queues when coming to pay their taxes. Now, they can pay the vignette while renewing their insurance policy.

BC: Does that mean that if a tax payer went to renew his or her in-

surance policy in October 2016 he wouldn't need purchase a vignette throughout 2017...

MMF: No, you will still have to pay for the vignette in October 2017, since you would be renewing your insurance at that moment. So it's not possible to avoid paying this

tax. Let me be clear about this: in the old system, car and bike owners were asked to purchase the vignette latest by February. Now, by including this tax in the insurance premium, their deadline has been extended. Tax payers are no more forced to pay by February. They can

pay any other month of the year when going to renew the insurance policy.

BC: The thing is some tax payers could just decide, once the deadline is reached, in October 2017 in your example, to avoid buying the vignette and go park their vehicle till the year ends...

MMF: When such a person returns in 2018, we will notice that he or she did not renew his or her insurance policy in October as supposed to. Then, that person will be asked to clear that debt. There is no way to escape this tax.

But the truth is that not all insurers are reliable. Some of them have even continued perceiving premiums despite not being accredited anymore. How can you control these?

Let me once again reassure you. There will be control. But that is not the most important. Presently, insurers are also tax payers, big ones in fact. Our decision to entrust them with the collection process does not come out of the blue.

Nowadays, many companies are tasked with collecting and paying taxes to tax authorities. These include insurance firms. The only change in 2017 is that in addition to VAT which the insurers already used to collect for tax authorities, they will collect an additional tax which is the vignette.

So, there is no need for concern. To be explicit, the amendment to the way the vehicle tax is collected was voted under the 2016 Finance law, but authorities believed a preparatory year was required for its implementation to be effective. We used the last year to proceed to some tests.

Insurers provide an exhaustive list of all those that have an insurance. Therefore, when the time comes we will proceed to controls with the insurance companies, in order to



Modeste Mopa Fatoing, Director General of Taxation: "I would like to clear a point. There will be no increase of the pump price of fuel. We should get passed this once and for all."

make sure that all tax payers owing the vignette pay what is due. And this is to us, I must say, nothing but a trivial matter. We are not worried in any way about it at the directorate general of taxation.

BC: In the 2017 Finance law, the municipal stamp's price increased. Does this respect the President's promise to fight poverty?

MMF: Revenues collected from municipal stamps are directed to the decentralized territorial communities. You are well aware of how important it is to improve primary care services for the people of these communities. This reform makes a lot of sense considering that even the price of the stamp duty, which profits the State more, was increased over the past years due to factors such as inflation. It rose from CFA500 to CFA1,000 now.

BC: Let's talk about patents. Wouldn't their suppression lead to a decrease in revenues as fake receipts might increase in number?

MMF: There is no such risk. You mentioned fake receipts. You might as well talk about fake patents. You

would notice that in our procedure, we are working on dematerializing processes and deeds to curb fraud. Earlier, we spoke about the vignette. The case is similar for the patents.

BC: In actual facts, what used to be done before 2017?

MMF: Before 2017, tax payer had a hard time calculating the exact cost of patent rights because it involved some formulas and variables that are not very easy to master. Due to this, most tax payers, even those from major firms, had to get to tax offices to get help in determining the amount they should pay for the patent.

We thought this to be the smartest thing to do, in order to simplify processes. The first reform introduced in the Finance law aims at simplifying modalities related to the calculation of patent cost. The reform aims to facilitate the payment of patent for all tax payers, both minor and major.

BC: One may ask what is the next step after helping the tax payer calculate the patent's cost?

MMF: Still in the same framework, we wondered if it was really necessary for tax payers to come down to tax offices to file their declaration, if they already knew how to determine how much they must pay for patent? Well, no! And this is what drove us to work on digitizing the declaration process, which is now more efficient. We thought "with an easier way to calculate the cost of patent, it would be simpler if any tax payer could, from his office or at any coffee shop, be able to declare his or her patent". The digitization of the process even provides the amount to be paid.

BC: What's next then?

MMF: Once you have your tax notice, would it be compulsory to get to the Taxation headquarters to pay the patent? Once again, the answer is no! Here, we thought of making it possible to go to any bank to wire the amount owed. We would like to save tax payers as much time as possible.



"The first reform introduced in the Finance law aims at simplifying modalities related to the calculation of patent cost. The reform aims to facilitate the payment of patent for all tax payers, both minor and major."

BC: Under the 2017 Finance law, the special tax on fuel was increased. Due to this, some fear transportation fees might soar as fuel price at the pump might rise subsequently. What do you make of this?

MMF: I would like to clear a point. There will be no increase of the pump price of fuel. We should get passed this once and for all. The 2017 Finance law has entered into force on January 1, 2017. If the increase of special tax on petroleum products had any impact on their pump prices, it should have been noticed since then. This said, the matter is closed.

The amendment concerns only the structure of petroleum products' prices. It has in no way an impact on their pump prices.

BC: Let's close with this. Over the past months, a lot of talk has been going on concerning land tax, especially about the measure which cancels arrears owned by tax payers that paid in 2016. Most believe it is a gift to bad tax payers. So who is paying the land tax?

MMF: Who pays the land tax you ask? Well, all property owners, either of a building or a bare land, regardless of if the land has a deed or not.

Land taxes are paid for buildings located in urban areas. Nobody is asked to pay a tax for houses in villages, far from cities. Now, was the measure a gift to bad payers? I would like to emphasize that tax cancellation measure is fully legal. It was voted by our parliament. It was our President who promulgated the Finance law for 2016 which included this measure. Well, what I am trying to say here is that the measure is a good thing.

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PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

EU grants Cameroon funding of FCfa 6.5 billion to improve Registrar system

The Cameroonian government and the local delegation of the European Commission signed on 24 January 2017 in Yaoundé, the capital of the country, a financing agreement of FCfa 6.5 billion, slightly over 10 million Euros.

The funds thus made available, we learned, will be used to improve governance in the country. This will be about further involving civil society organisations, for example. Moreover, this funding from the European Union will help with improving the Birth and Death Registrar in Cameroon. Indeed, revealed Françoise Collet, Head of the EU Commission delegation, over half of the children born in Cameroon are

not listed in the registrars.

This proportion of unregistered births goes up to 56% in Easter Cameroon, and up to 338% in the Extreme-North, Françoise Collet revealed, citing a study on this issue. Cameroon will launch an agro-industrial technopole covering over 400 ha in the Central region Ouassa Babouté, village in the Nkoteng Arrondissement in the Central region of Cameroon, will be the location of the very first agro-industrial technopole in the country, revealed the Minister of Industry, Ernest Gbwaboubou, specifying that the government is working on this project with the support of the United Nations Industrial

Development Organisation (UNIDO). This project, we learned, is a practical application of the Industrialisation Master Plan (PDI), recently approved by the Cameroonian government. A plan which mainly rests upon the development of the agro-industrial, energy and digital sectors.

At the agribusiness level, Minister Gbwaboubou explains, the government will put the priority on "developing agro-industrial technopoles", to boost the local production and turn Cameroon into a breadbasket for the 10 CEEAC countries and 150 million Nigerian citizens, a country with which Cameroon shares a 1,500-km long border.

The Cameroonian passport only gives access to a third of the destinations opened to Seychelles or Mauritian passports

According to the website Passportindex.org, who creates a world ranking on passports depending on the ease they provide when travelling, Cameroon is among the countries whose passports offer the least possibilities of travelling without a visa or by getting a visa upon arrival. With only 43 open destinations, the Cameroonian passport is among the last 15 in Africa in terms of travelling facilitation.

The country is far behind Seychelles, first in this Passportindex.org ranking. Indeed, we learned, it is possible with a Seychelles passport to freely travel to 126 countries (including



96 without visa and 30 with a visa upon arrival), while the Mauritian passport opens 118 destinations to its holder; against 90 for the South African passport.

In the CEMAC zone, the Cameroonian passport (with a

ranking equal to Equatorial Guinea and Congolese documents) is even outranked by Chad (44 destinations), Gabon (44 destinations) and the Central African Republic (44 destinations).

To protect the peri-urban ecosystem, thousands of trees will be planted in 2017 in the capital of Cameroon

Starting from 2017, the Urban Community of Yaoundé (CUY) is planning to plant several thousand trees to reforest Mounts Messa, Mbankolo and Yéyé, per a partnership agreement signed on 18 January 2017 in the Cameroonian capital with the Development Research Institute (IRD), the French scientific research establishment who will carry out a preliminary study. The study to be undertaken by IRD, between January and April 2017, will

propose practical courses of action to reforest and develop these three forested areas which threaten the ecosystem with risks of rock slides and erosion. The final report will include a botanical section to help in creating a list of plant species present on the three hills, recommendations on sites to be protected or reforested in priority, as well as proposals on species which may be used to reforest. At the ichthyological level, the study will produce an

inventory of the river fish fauna in the zone under consideration and will propose actions to protect the biodiversity.

CUY and IRD declare having common concerns in terms of sustainable urban development, to serve both the current population and future generations. This shared vision is reflected in a joint desire to build a long-term partnership, with this study being the first step.

The Cameroonian Ministry of Public Health purchases 20 Cardiopad, the medical tablet

The Minister of Public Health (Minsanté), André Mama Fouda recently chaired in Yaoundé, the official ceremony for the reception of the 20 first copies of the touch-screen medical tablets called Cardiopad, engineered by Cameroonian inventor Arthur Zang meant for district hospitals. During this ceremony, Mr Zang explained to the Minsanté that this is a device which helps to remotely transfer the results of medical check-ups to cardiologists. A great opportunity for the rural zones' inhabitants. Still according to him, the Cardiopad enables any person, even with basic training, to measure the cardiac physiological data. Because, through this tablet, the pulsation frequency between two heartbeats can be computed, visualised and recorded and simultaneously remotely transferred to a cardiologist to enable the medical specialist establish a diagnosis.

The Cardiopad, first African medical tablet manufactured by Cameroonian engineer Arthur Zang, is sold in Cameroon by the start-up Himore Medical. Officially, about 300 kits were sold in 2016, at FCfa 2 million apiece.



Cameroonian government to get single manual for public investment audit procedures



The Managing Director of Economy, Isaac Tamba, opened on Tuesday 17 January 2017 in Yaoundé, the conference to validate the single manual on public investment audit procedures.

According to Isaac Tamba, this reference document must not only take into account the physical implementation, but also the relevance and efficiency of the public expenditure to improve the living conditions of the population and the business

environment, through infrastructure of quality. His colleague from the Audit Team, Henri Mbusnoum, indicated that his organisation has been encountering several difficulties, particularly those linked to the plethora of texts which regulate public finances, and the absence of a proper reference document. *“This is therefore about standardising the texts and producing a single document in terms of public investment audit, to improve the efficiency in compliance*

with the new financial regime of the State”, Mr Mbusnoum declared.

The Yaoundé convention comes in a context where the public investment budget of the State has been gradually increasing since 2010. For example, in 2017, the share allocated to investment is FCfa 1,586.9 billion, representing 36.7% of the global budget of the State. The priority in this case goes to infrastructure and production sectors.

Cabinet meeting: Urgency in cutting back on the State's spending habits

The billions of FCfa sunk every year in the State's operations are back on the agenda. The fabulous lifestyle of the State is back on the front news. In short, everyone is again talking about the quality of the public expenditure.

The topic was at the heart of the presentation given by the Minister of Finance during the Cabinet meeting held yesterday, 26 January 2017. Alamine Ousmane Mey was addressing the Prime Minister and all members of the government. The Minister of Finance was first and foremost talking to those who are the main payment mandate issuer of the State's budget. He reminded them of the following requirements: discipline, responsibility and quality of the expenditure.



Indeed, the situation is grave considering economic crisis which affects the countries in the Central African Economic Community (CEMAC). And Cameroon has not been spared, even though it has shown the best resilience in the sub-region.

PAUL BIYA

It is not the first time the alarm is rung. These past years, the President himself came back to this topic on several occasions. "I want to once again bring your attention to the necessity of streamlining the spending and improve their quality in an international environment marked by the scarcity of financial resources", Paul Biya repeated to the government, in his special address during the 9 December 2014 Cabinet meeting. The Head of State acknowledged a sad fact: *"I unfortunately noticed that the quality of the public expenditure continually worsened, particularly with an accumulation of expenditure whose necessity is not evident"*. Paul Biya even gave some examples to illustrate the issue: unbridled increase in the spending related to goods and services, excessive increase in the number of missions especially abroad, multiplication of the number of committees and inappropriate projects or excessive increases in subsidies. A few days later, the President came back on

this preoccupation in his address to the nation on 31 December. Years have gone by. And on this 26 January 2017, the Minister of Finance brought the attention of his colleagues on the number, frequency and volume of missions abroad, or on the fuel, water, electricity and telephone expenditure. The problem is thus set again today in almost identical terms. It is as if nothing changed after all the interventions of the President and despite the denunciations made by the general opinion on the State's wastefulness.

CRISIS IN THE CEMAC ZONE

This time however, the problem must be taken very seriously, based on the comments of Minister Alamine Ousmane Mey. Indeed, the situation is grave considering economic crisis which affects the countries in the Central African Economic Community (CEMAC). And Cameroon has not been spared, even though it has shown the best resilience in the sub-region.

Nevertheless on 26 January 2017, the Minister of Finance recalled that the quality of the public expenditure is one of the solutions to come out of the crisis. This was clearly mentioned during the Extraordinary Summit which gathered the CEMAC Heads of State in Yaoundé this past 23 December.

The 26 January Cabinet meeting thus decided that Cameroon must implement *"an adequate budget policy, in particular through significant cuts in the lifestyle of the State and streamlining transfer spending"*. But we must go further than a simple budget regulation. The Cabinet also prescribed: *"the strict respect of the quarterly commitment quotas, limiting credit transfers and streamlining basic spending"*.

Once again the problems linked to the public spending are on the forefront in Cameroon. And the situation is critical. And everyone knows what is expected.

Assongmo Necdem

FINANCE

Calvin Tiam, the Cameroonian engineer who manufactures house roof sheathing from recycled plastic waste

A Cameroonian engineer specialising in industrial processes and renewable energy, Calvin Tiam is about to create a revolution in Burkina Faso, where he launched some years ago his start-up Teco2 (Toiture écologique et économique – Ecological and Affordable Roofing).

Within this structure, the Cameroonian engineer developed sheet metal made from recycled plastic waste. *“Locally manufactured, this material adds considerable value to polyethylene plastic waste. A square metre of Teco2 sheathing represents approximately 10 kg of recycled plastic, representing a reduction of 9 kg in CO₂ equivalent greenhouse gas in the environment”*, explains the young engineer.

THERMAL COMFORT

In addition to contributing to the protection of the environment, the green sheet metal developed by Teco2, we learned, provide thermal



The start-up “is currently seeking financial support and partners to start a first production series and carry out a full study on the performances of the material via the construction of a pilot house”.

comfort in houses, by generating less heat than aluminium sheet metal.

TO LAUNCH THE PRODUCTION

After the prototype phase, Teco2, which just had its invention successfully tested by several laboratories, is now planning to launch the production of its green sheet metal on a large scale. In this regard, Calvin Tiam confides, the start-up “is currently seeking financial support

and partners to start a first production series and carry out a full study on the performances of the material via the construction of a pilot house”.

With its affordable, ecological and isothermal sheet metal, this start-up plans, in the short term, to recycle 500 tons of plastic waste per year, with the goal of providing a compatible roof to approximately 1,300 burkinabe households.

412 microfinance establishments received their approval in Cameroon for 2017

The Cameroonian Minister of Finance, Alamine Ousmane Mey, has just published the list of 412 approved microfinance establishments, and therefore authorised to carry out their activities in Cameroon during 2017. Upon observation, this list, which had 500 establishments in 2015, against

418 only in 2016, keeps on shrinking, due in part to cancellations of approvals against some structures, and the management problems which they have been facing recently. Indeed, after the bankruptcy of Cofinest and Fiffa some years ago, Crédit Mutuel and Comeci are in trou-

ble, Société Financière Africaine (SFA) was put under administration, while Binum Tontine, Djagui du Cameroun and Mutuelle de Développement et d'Investissements du Cameroun (MDIC) simply had their approval withdrawn.

Cameroon plans to become “the factory of the new Industrial Africa by 2050”



“I must stress that this plan is in line with the five main priorities of the African Development Bank group which are: to light up Africa and provide electricity, feed Africa, integrate Africa, industrialise Africa and improve the quality of life of Africans”.

According to the Cameroonian Minister of Mining, Industry and Technological Development (Minmidt), Ernerst Gbwaboubou, the Industrialisation Master Plan (PDI) which Cameroon just got is meant to turn this Central African country in to “the factory of the new Industrial Africa by 2050”.

To achieve this, the government member highlighted in an interview with the pro-government daily, the PDI rests upon three pillars: the food, energy and digital industries.

“I must stress that this plan is in line with the five main priorities of the African Development Bank group which are: to light up Africa and provide electricity, feed Africa, integrate Africa, industrialise Africa and improve the quality of life of Africans”, pointed out Ernest Gbwaboubou.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

In practical terms, at the operational level, in the energy sector, the PDI provides for the construction of the maximum number of energy infrastructure on the Sanaga, to pack this river on which is located 75% of the hydroelectric potential of Cameroon. This is also about “*speeding up the development of other forms of renewable energy (biomass, natural gas, solar power) to provide affordable and ecological energy to our local industries, and finally concern ourselves with the vast market our big neighbour, Nigeria, represents with energy needs estimated at 88,800 Megawatts in 2020*”.

INDUSTRIAL TECHNOPOLES

On the food industry side, we learned, the PDI will put the priority on “*developing agro-industrial technopoles (technical centres)*”, to turn Cameroon into the bread basket of

the 10 CEEAC countries and 150 million Nigerian citizens, a country with which Cameroon shares a 1,500-km long border. *“You are well aware that Cameroon imported 1.388 million tons of food products in 2015 worth over FCfa 800 billion, thereby exceeding for the 1st time hydrocarbons (1.294 million tons) and clinker (1.323 million tons). Primarily, this concerns rice (730,000 tons), fish (217,000 tons), cooking salt (139,000 tons) and other various food products (301,000 tons). This situation remains without explanation considering the agro-ecological possibilities of the country”,* repeats Mr Gbwaboubou.

In terms of digital economy development, we can remember that the Cameroonian government, through the Ministry of Posts and Telecoms, just established a plan officially requiring funding of approximately FCfa 600 billion.

AGRIBUSINESS

Exports to Nigeria increase the price of cereals in Cameroon's Extreme-North

In the Extreme-North region of Cameroon, the price of a 50-kg bag of millet and maize increased by FCfa 2,000 over the last four months, we learned from local sources. On top of the low rainfall observed in this area of Cameroon, which led to a drop in the production of cereals, traders also point out exports to Nigeria. Indeed, after being closed for several months due to the violence committed by the Islamist sect Boko Haram in the country, the Cameroonian government launched some months

ago, a process to gradually reopen its land borders with this neighbouring country, the deadly attacks by members of Boko Haram having considerably reduced in numbers.

The Boko Haram threat was also a factor in the drop of the cereal crop production in the Extreme-North of Cameroon these past years, since fearing for their lives, many groups of inhabitants fled their villages, leaving their fields abandoned.

Consequently, in 2014, the cereal production in this part of Cameroon



decreased by 132,000 tons, based on official statistics. In 2015, the cereal deficit in the Extreme-North region was around 200,000 tons.

Cameroon will launch an agro-industrial technopole covering over 400 ha in the Central region

Ouassa Babouté, village in the Nkoteng Arrondissement in the Central region of Cameroon, will be the location of the very first agro-industrial technopole in the country, revealed the Minister of Industry, Ernest Gbwaboubou, specifying that the government is working on this project with the support of the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO). This project, we learned, is a practical application of the Industrialisation Master Plan (PDI), recently approved by the Cameroonian government. A plan which mainly rests upon the development of the agro-industrial, energy and digital sectors. At the agribusiness level, Minister Gbwaboubou explains, the government will put the priority on "*developing agro-industrial technopoles*", to



boost the local production and turn Cameroon into a breadbasket for the 10 CEEAC countries and 150 million

Nigerian citizens, a country with which Cameroon shares a 1,500-km long border.

With the expertise of Malaysian Felda Ipco, billionaire Nana Bouba sets out to conquer the palm oil market



The cargoes of palm oil from these oil processing plants will help the Nana Bouba group in ensuring its autonomy in terms of supply to its Azur SA refinery, specialised in the refinery of palm oil and the production of household soap.

The Nana Bouba Group, founded by the eponymous billionaire, launched in 2016 in the Littoral region of Cameroon, particularly Yabassi in the Nkam district, a gigantic project for the creation of oil palm plantations, we learned from reliable sources.

The first 500 hectares were planted last year, under the banner of a new company labelled Greenfield SA. In 2017, this company which as part of this agri-industrial project (global investments estimated at FCfa 70 billion) is being coached by experts from the Malaysian public company Felda Ipco, is planning to plant 1,000 additional hectares of oil palm, to reach 30,000 hectares in the long term, with 1,000 hectares planted every year.

In Greenfield SA's mission statement, our source highlights, the construction of a base for approximately

3,500 workers who will operate in these farms is also scheduled, as well as support for the neighbouring populations in setting up oil palm village plantations covering approximately 1,500 hectares, and the installation of oil processing factories (production capacity of 10 to 15 tons per hour), of which the first should be operational in 2020.

The cargoes of palm oil from these oil processing plants will help the Nana Bouba group in ensuring its autonomy in terms of supply to its Azur SA refinery, specialised in the refinery of palm oil and the production of household soap.

But globally, the oil palm plantations and oil processing plants of Greenfield SA will help boost the national production of palm oil, which has been whittling down throughout the years, officially due to climate reasons. Indeed, according to the Regulatory Committee of the

oleaginous sector, the structural deficit registered in this field, which peaked at 100,000 tons per year, has now reached 130,000 tons in the past 2 years.

After building his fortune and reputation in the distribution of consumer products (Soacam), food industry (Sagri), oil processing (Azur), civil engineering (Berni SA) and the production of health drinks and mineral water under the brand Opur (Nabco); Nana Bouba is about to become one of the biggest farmers in Cameroon.

Indeed, in May 2016, during a tour by the Ministry of Agriculture, Henri Eyebe Ayissi, in the north of the country, we discovered Nana Bouba as an industrial scale maize farmer. With 300 hectares already planted in the towns of Wassandé and Djertou, located in his native Adamaoua.

Brice R. Mbodiam

Cameroonian importers have until May 2018 to deplete their stocks of Metalaxyl-based pesticides



After the official ban on imports in Cameroon of Metalaxyl-based pesticides, considered detrimental to the quality of cocoa, the Cameroonian government has given until May 2018 to enable importers to deplete their stocks which were already available on the market before the ban was declared.

"We just fear that the price of Metalaxyl-based pesticides will soar on

the market during the interim period. Because, producers may tend to instinctively search for these products, out of habit", dreads Francis Leku Azenaku, Director of Regulation and Quality Control of Products and Agricultural Inputs in the Ministry of Agriculture (Minader).

Interviewed by the pro-governmental daily, this Minader senior officer moreover announced the upcoming

launch of an information campaign on pesticides made from alternatives to Metalaxyl. *"These choices to which producers were not used represent only 15% of the pesticides on the market. These are products made from Mefenoxam, Benalaxyl or Dimethomorph. These products will now be part of the public procurement".*

ITC & TELECOM

Rush of American collectors to the virtual gallery launched by Cameroon to promote local arts

Only four months after its launch, the virtual gallery set up by the Cameroonian Ministry of SME, Social Economy and Arts, is already generating a lot of interest from art collectors, particularly in the USA (<http://cameroongallery.com>). Indeed, most of the art pieces exhibited on the virtual gallery have already *"been ordered by American consumers, who saw these pieces on internet"*, revealed Minister Etoundi Ngoa. The revenues from these sales were even recently distributed to approximately 70 Cameroonian artists, less a 5% retainer representing the tax to be paid to the public Treasury. The art pieces on exhibit in the virtual gallery of Cameroon are presented by the artists to the managers of the arts centres installed in the 10 regions of the country. The experts established in said centres are then



tasked with selecting the most deserving products and making them available to possible buyers online. At the moment, we learned, only the

arts centres in Yaoundé and Limbe have access to this gallery. The other centres will be gradually connected.

Orange Cameroun joins MTN for transactions from bank to mobile accounts on the Afriland First Bank network

After MTN Cameroun in 2015, the local subsidiary of telecoms operator Orange recently connected to Mobile Account Connected (MAC), a service launched in partnership with the leader in the Cameroonian banking market, Afriland First Bank. Through this offer, it is now possible for Afriland First Bank clients holding MTN Mobile Money or

Orange Money accounts, to check their bank account balance on their mobile phones, and carry out financial transactions between their bank and mobile accounts. Through its connection with MAC, Orange Cameroun now benefits from two banking networks providing its 2.8 million Orange Money accounts holders, the possibility

of making operations from bank accounts to mobile accounts. We can recall, indeed, that on 9 July 2015, the Cameroonian branch of the French telecoms group Orange signed a partnership with Ecobank Cameroun, to enable this type of financial transaction.

In 2017, the Ministry of Posts and Telecoms announces more supervision for youth and start-ups



Managing the youth and start-ups will be a priority in the actions of the Cameroonian Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications (Minpostel) this year, indicated Minister Minette Libom Li Likeng on 20 January in the capital, while receiving the wishes of

her subordinates.

"We will put an emphasis on supervising the youth and the start-ups to transform their ideas into digital enterprises, while we will continue to develop the infrastructure", she announced.

Moreover, the Minister of Posts and Telecoms added that 2017 will be the year of readjustments in the regulatory field. Because, Mrs Libom Li Likeng explained, *"we cannot develop the digital economy if there is no digital trust"*.

ENERGY

FCfa 70 billion for investment in Lom Pangar dam production plant and power transmission line



The Cameroonian government and financial backers such as the Development Bank of Central African States (BDEAC) and the African Development Bank (ADB), will invest FCfa 70 billion in the construction of Lom Pangar associated infrastructure, we learn from reliable sources. Indeed, after the actual dam, Cameroonian authorities are preparing to launch construction work on the plant at the foot of the dam, which will produce 30 MW of

electricity intended to supply around 150 villages in the East region. The contract has been awarded to the company China Camc Engineering, favoured over Spanish Elecnor, whose offer was judged to be *“non-compliant above all with the technical plan”*. The other associated infrastructure of the Lom Pangar dam, whose work should begin shortly is the construction of a high voltage line to carry electricity from the production plant up to Bertoua,

as well as the distribution lines over a total distance of 105 Km.

In the month of December 2015, the French industrial group Cegelec, thanks to a consortium comprising its Moroccan and Cameroonian subsidiaries, won a contract worth FCfa 9 billion, for the *“design, provision, installation and commissioning of the 90 KV high voltage line”* on this project.

FCfa 253 million to compensate the populations affected by the high voltage power line of the Lom Pangar dam in Cameroon

On 23 January 2017, the Cameroonian government launched the operation to compensate the populations affected by the project for the construction of a high voltage power line to transport electricity between the Lom Pangar dam and the town of Bertoua, in the Eastern region. Numbering over 500 and coming from 17 villages in this forest region of Cameroon, these people, whose properties will be destroyed as part of this project, will receive a total of FCfa 253 million. As a reminder, the Lom Pangar hydro-electric development, which enabled Cameroon to get its biggest dam, includes the construction of an adjoining plant with a capacity of 30 MW. The energy produced on this site will help provide electricity to 150 villages. It will be transported by a line to be built over approximately 105 km, between the site of the dam and the town of Bertoua, the regional capital of Eastern-Cameroon.



New extension of the Bowleven's Bomono permit, in expectation of an business licence since 2015

The exploration licence of the British oil and gas firm Bowleven, operating the Bomono permit covering two blocks of 2,328 km in the Douala basin, located in the Cameroonian onshore, has been extended to 12 December 2018, the company announced in an official communiqué. This permit expired on 12 December 2016, after two prior extensions granted in December 2014 and 2015. This new extension of Bowleven's permit on Bomono, we officially learned, will help protect the interests of the British firm over the

area in question, while awaiting the verdict of the Cameroonian government on the application submitted by Bowleven for a gas operating licence since November 2015, year during which the British oil and gas company drilled two wells (Zingana and Moambe) in Bomono, wells which confirmed the presence of hydrocarbons.

The oil and gas company moreover announced, that *"the ministry's approval for the extension of the permit having been now received, the process for the operating permit will follow,*

as stipulated by the Cameroonian authorities".

As a reminder, on 8 January 2016, this British firm announced having completed the extended flow trials on the Moambe and Zingana wells. *"The results to date still support the plans for an initial offer of 5 to 6 mmscfd gas to produce electricity based on the development plan establishment with Actis and Eneo in Cameroon (concessionaire of the electricity service)"*, repeated Bowleven.

The commissioning of the 15 MW Mekin dam prevented by social and environmental problems

The Mekin hydroelectric dam, built in the South-Cameroon region, will not produce the expected 15 MW anytime soon to supply households in the eight municipalities in the Dja and Lobo districts in electricity. In addition to the delays observed in the process to relocate the populations affected by the project, we learned during a recent ground

visit by the local public authorities, environment issues are preventing the start of the turbines. Indeed, we learned from reliable sources, recent tests made on this energy infrastructure led to at least two neighbouring bridges being flooded, thus revealing dysfunctions which will need to be remedied before the commissioning of

the structure.

As a reminder, the Mekin dam was built by China National Electric Engineering Corporation (CNEEC), from a Chinese financing of approximately FCfa 25 billion in favour of the Cameroonian State. The project also includes the construction of a 33-km transport line.

British company Joule Africa announces feasibility study for 458 MW power plant in North-West Cameroon



The Cameroonian State, represented by the Minister of Water and Energy (Minee), Basile Atangana Kouna, electricity company Eneo, Cameroonian subsidiary of the British investment fund Actis and Joule Africa Ltd, a British company represented by its President Mark Green, signed on 12 January 2017 in Yaoundé, a three-party letter of intent for the construction of the Kpep hydroelectric plant (North-

West) with a capacity of 45 MW, from the Katsina River. According to Joël Nana Kontchou, Managing Director of Eneo, the letter of intent thus signed serves as a guarantee from the government of Cameroon and the company Eneo to the service provider Joule Africa. Mark Green explained that with the signing of said letter, the Kpep project has moved to the next step. Indeed, after the pre-feasibility study

already carried out by the international consultancy firm Lahmeyer International, the project is now about to move to the full feasibility study phase.

Mark Green also announced the start of topographical studies, geo-technical works, the preliminary technical design and an environment and social impact study. The project is estimated to cost USD 1.5 billion. Work duration will be 4 years.

MINING

Cameroon launches new prospection campaign of mining sites in six regions of the country



The Cameroonian government officially launched last 24 January, a programme of geological and geochemical mapping in six regions of the country. It concerns Adamawa, the Centre, East, Littoral, North-West and South-West. These prospecting

works of mining sites will be carried out by a group of firms comprising BRGM, Cameroonian company BEIG3 and Finnish GTK. During 30 months, about fifteen experts in the consortium will travel to the above-mentioned regions, with a view to *"drawing up 13 geological maps at 1/200 000, exploring mining sites with a sampling of a total of 18000 specimens, and set up a geological and mining information system to disseminate information and promote the Cameroonian mining sector"*.

This programme of geological and geochemical mapping has a budget of around FCfa 4.5 billion, financed by the World Bank. It is undertaken within the framework of the Project to Strengthen Capacity in the

Mining Sector (Precasem - Projet de renforcement des capacités dans le secteur minier), supervised by the Ministry of Mines.

We recall that within the framework of this same Precasem, the Cameroonian government initiated in January 2014, operations of *"air-borne geophysical survey"* covering an area of 160,000 Km² spread between the six regions of the country (North, Adamawa, West, East, Littoral and Centre).

All its activities financially supported by the World Bank, we learn officially, aim to assess the real mining potential of Cameroon, of which only 40% of the country has been subjected to mining exploration up until now.

GIZ, the German Cooperation agency, offers IT system to CEMAC for raw materials management

The Commission of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC) will receive on 25 January 2017 in Yaoundé an IT and management system as part of the Project to strengthen the governance of raw materials in Central Africa (REMAP/CEMAC) led by the German Cooperation, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ).

This IT system will help CEMAC's headquarters and country representa-

tions, to have rapid access to all information processed in member-States, particularly with regards to the mining industries, GIZ explained. The organisation added: *"Apart from training CEMAC personnel on rapidly accessing knowledge processed by the Commission via an innovative IT system, the REMAP project will bring its support to the provision of a server whose technical capacities will enable the storage of large amounts of data"*. REMAP is the result of a master

agreement signed in 2008 between the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), and the CEMAC Commission. The missions of the project are, among other things, to help improve the contribution of mining resources to the reduction of poverty, contribute to strengthen transparency and governance of revenues from the mining sector and intensify international cooperation in the oil, gas and mining production sector.

Emmanuel Peughouia becomes the first Cameroonian to invest in cement production



We now have a little bit of information on the shareholders of Medcem Cameroun, the cement factory owned by the Turkish group Eren Holding, which was commissioned on 16 December 2016 on the banks of the Wouri in Douala, the economic capital of the country, by the Prime Minister Philémon Yang. A share in the capital of this cement production unit, the 4th in the country, is owned by Cameroonian Emmanuel Peughouia.

He is the owner of the hardware store group Quifeurou (Quincaillerie du feu rouge), whose first store was opened in 1983 in the town of Bafoussam, the regional capital of the Western region. *“Quifeurou, in its quest to procure cement of quality and low price to its clients, and encouraged by the 2013 Act on promoting private investment in Cameroon, got in contact with its partner Eren*

Holding, leader in the construction material market in Turkey”, explained Emmanuel Peughouia during the commissioning of the Medcem plant in Douala, thus revealed the genesis of the project.

In the end, FCfa 20.3 billion in total were invested by both partners in the Cameroonian economic capital, for a yearly production of 600,000 tons of cement extensible to one million tons. This production will be distributed by the hardware store chain Quifeurou, who has, officially, to date, 56 stores in 35 towns in Cameroon, Central African Republic and Chad.

This partnership, which according to Emmanuel Peughouia *“associates the expertise in cement production in Turkey to the Cameroonian experience in terms of distribution of building materials”*, provides this businessman with the title of first Cameroonian to

invest in the production of cement in his country.

“We are very proud to be the first Cameroonian business to invest in this sector, which, for several decades, remained inaccessible to nationals”, he happily declared on 16 December 2016 in Douala. Indeed, for 48 years, Cimencam, subsidiary of the Lafarge-Holcim group, had a monopolistic reign over the Cameroonian cement market.

This monopoly only ended in 2014, with the opening of a second cement factory in the country by Cima, a subsidiary of the Moroccan group Addoha. This operator was followed a year later, on the Cameroonian market by Nigerian billionaire Aliko Dangote, and today by the first Cameroonian businessman: Emmanuel Peughouia.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Norwegian agency Eksportkerditt finances water distribution projects in Cameroon with FCfa 38 billion



The towns of Meyomessala, Melong and Nkongsamba will soon be supplied in drinking water thanks to a buyer-credit agreement worth FCfa 37.8 billion, signed on 13 January 2017 in Yaoundé, between the Minister of Economy, Planning and Land Development (Minepat), Louis Paul Motaze, and the Director of Industry and Renewable Energy for Norwegian Bank GIEK, Ivar Slengesol.

The specificity of this project, is that it will implement a technology based on membrane filtration, which ensures the very good quality of the water produced, as well as the durability and reliability of the equipment at competitive cost", explains Louis Paul Motaze. Through

the future water supplies, he added, the additional production capacity in urban and peri-urban areas will be approximately 20,000 m³/day, which will help in supplying 250,000 people and increase the coverage. Up to 70% of the workforce used during the construction phase will be local, all professional categories combined. The Cameroonian government started negotiating with the Norwegian agency Eksportkerditt SA about two years ago, to finance the project for the construction, expansion and reinforcement of drinking water distribution systems for these three Cameroonian cities. The negotiations which resulted in the signature of a memorandum of understanding on 30 June 2015, followed by a com-

mercial contract on 28 August 2015 between the related Cameroonian administrations and the private Norwegian partners, are intended to associate the technical, economic and financial assistance of the Norwegian Agency Eksportkerditt SA to the country's development efforts. This new partnership which starts with Cameroon through this first project, will generate new commitments such as the project to strengthen and expand a drinking water station in Japoma (Littoral region) and the one for the supply of 64 power generators in preparation of the 2019 Africa Cup of Nations (AfCON) worth Euros 75 million.

84% of structural works on second bridge over Wouri completed

A major milestone in the construction of the second bridge over the Wouri River was completed in January 2017 in the economic capital of Cameroon because the company Sogea Satom, in charge of the construction of the second bridge over the Wouri, put in place the final connection, equivalent to joining the two halves of the bridge from the Déïdo and Bonabéri sides.

These works signify the end of structural works for the viaduct. The Minister of Public Works (Mintp) estimates that the physical completion rate is 84% in 97% of time allocated. Concerning the entry points to the bridge, the rate of completion of the works is 33%. The deck of the viaducts for the railroad structural works has been fully completed. Regarding the adjoining developments, the general physical completion rate is 43% with 41% on the Déïdo side and 46% on the Bonabéri side.

The design and implementation of the associated developments for the second bridge over the Wouri were established to optimise the core project, to make it more functional due to the development seen in the area of its location. This extension is



meant to solve some important limitations mainly in the management of the traffic in the port area. The works include the development of a

2x3 lanes and sidewalks access road, from the Bonassama roundabout to the SCDP roundabout, including the roadway deck.

Atidolf Nigeria launches works for 72 km road in Central Cameroon

The Ministry of Public Works (Mintp) advises that the company Atidolf Nigeria, winner of the contract for asphaltting works on the Soa-Esse-Awae road in the Central region of the country, has been carrying out since December 2016, operations for the delimitation of the route and establishment of the road and easements, which, by the way, have been completed between the towns of Esse and Awae.

Activities linked to the search for deposits of raw materials are also underway. On the release of the easements in the project, Mintp indicates that the property evaluation works for the expropriation of neighbouring populations are being executed by a Commission. With regards to the displacement of public networks, the concessionaires of the networks (Camtel, Eneo, Camwater) have been asked by the Ministry of Public

Works on 14 December 2016 for the evaluation of the expected services. The 72 km Soa-Esse-Awae axis, has been selected to be undertaken in the road project programme of the three-year emergency plan issued by the government in December 2015. Construction works will be executed during 24 months for a sum amounting to FCfa 36 billion.

LEADER OF THE MONTH

Kate Fotso, “*iron lady*” of the cocoa sector in Cameroon, is the richest woman in the country

American *Forbes* magazine ranks her among the 30 largest fortunes in sub-Saharan francophone Africa.

252 million dollars, approximately FCfa 150 billion. Such is the amount of the financial cushion on which sits Kate Kanyi-Tomedi Fotso, MD of Telcar Cocoa LTD, leading enterprise in the export of cocoa in Cameroon (with more than 30% of exported volumes) and trader of the American firm Cargill.

This revelation made by *Forbes* magazine ranks this Cameroonian economic operator among the 30 largest fortunes in sub-Saharan francophone Africa. The one that the Minister of Commerce, Luc Magloire Mbarga Atangana, often likes to call “*the iron lady*” of the Cameroonian cocoa sector, and above all the richest woman in the country, we learn.

Outstanding identity in the local cocoa sector, in which she has been moving for around twenty years beside men without displaying the least complex, the MD of Telcar Cocoa has also for a number of years, been the principal sponsor of certified cocoa farming in Cameroon.

Over the last three cocoa campaigns, for example, the company that Mrs Fotso manages has distributed FCfa 1.5 billion in bonuses to producers of certified cocoa. The cocoa sector also owes its Academy of Cooperatives (Coop Academy) started in March

2016, to this manager of Telcar Cocoa, company ranked 18th out of the first 100 Cameroonian companies in terms of sales revenue.

The Coop Academy, which attracted the first investment of the IFC in the Cameroonian cocoa industry, aims to form, over a period of 3 years, about 908 delegates belonging to 227 cooperatives of cocoa farmers; to transform their organisations into viable, sustainable and profitable enterprises.

But before the Academy of Cooperatives, Kate Fotso, who implements the “Cargill Cocoa Promise” in Cameroon, had allowed around 21,000 cocoa producers to be trained, between 2011 and 2015, in best practices, in the regions of the Littoral, South-West, Central and South Cameroon. Among these producers, 8,000 received certifications.

The work of Kate Fotso within the cocoa sector resulted in her being in the spotlight during 2015 edition of the International Festival of Cameroonian Cocoa (Festicacao), organised in that year under the theme: “Women in Cocoa”. Her advice and the managerial rigour acknowledged in women have and will continue to contribute to the influence of TAF Investment Group,



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the holding company founded by her husband, the late André Fotso, also an industrialist. He was the boss of Cameroonian bosses between 2012 and 2 August 2016, date of his death in Paris.

Brice R. Mbodiam

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