

REPUBLIQUE DU CAMEROUN  
Paix-Travail-Patrie

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MINISTERE DE LA FONCTION PUBLIQUE  
ET DE LA REFORME ADMINISTRATIVE  
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REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON  
Peace-Work-Fatherland

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MINISTRY OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE  
AND ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM  
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## **AFRICAN PUBLIC SERVICE DAY**

# **Letter from the Minister of the Public Service and Administrative Reform to Users of the Public Service**

*23 JUNE 2019*

## ***Dear Users and Partners of the Cameroon Public Service***

It is likely that a good number of you have just learned today of the African Day of the Public Service, the 24<sup>th</sup> edition of which Cameroon is celebrating on 23 June 2019 in communion with the international community.

This day was initiated during the first Pan-African Conference of Ministers of the Public Service, held in Tangier, Morocco, on 20 and 21 June 1994, and adopted by the United Nations, under Resolution No.57/277 of 20 December 2002.

The theme for this year is, ***“The Intersection of Youth Empowerment and Migration: Entrenching a Culture of Good Governance, ICTs and Innovation for Inclusive Service Delivery”***.

### **Dear Users and Partners**

With regard to migratory flow, particularly illegal immigration whose striking images are fraught with tragedies, which often affect aspirants for departure, I must admit that the misery of young people in particular is very disturbing.

In the face of this worrying situation, the President of the Republic, H.E. Paul BIYA, declared in his end-of-year address of 31 December 2018: ***“A problem of particular concern to me is still to be addressed. I am referring to unemployment, especially among youth. Naturally, the government services responsible for addressing the issue will do what is expected of them. However, it should be acknowledged that this social ill which affects most countries on the planet, is closely linked to the level of economic activity, in other words growth. That is why we will do all we can to encourage and boost the growth rebound we are currently experiencing”***.

The economic marginalisation of youth pushes them into illegal immigration or violent extremism. The Government of Cameroon is striving to combat this ill through different initiatives. In this regard, a campaign was launched dubbed “No more deaths in the desert or sea” designed to discourage young Africans from venturing into the Sahara desert or the Mediterranean Sea and to encourage them to take interest in the socio-economic integration opportunities available in Cameroon. The Government and its partners, are increasing information and awareness actions centred on the stakes and challenges of immigration as well as offering support to migrants. A programme for the protection and reintegration of migrants is under implementation.

In reality, for more than twenty years, the Republic of Cameroon took important measures aimed at empowering youth and the fight against economic migration. This require putting in place programmes designed to ensure the economic independence of young people, particularly girl children, by affording them through education, apprenticeship and professional training, access to sustainable livelihood and decent job such as they can find fulfilment, assert their identity and protect themselves from all forms

of discrimination. These young people can then contribute fully to the development of their community.

Moreover, our country has put in place institutions to promote youth employment as well as specific programmes to promote employment for the most underprivileged groups (youth, women, persons with disabilities, indigenous minorities), the socio-economic integration of youth and increasing the number of young persons in the Public Service. This is how MINFOPRA with backing from the Prime Minister, Head of Government, prepared, thanks to a three-year plan, recruitment of a workforce amounting to 5179 for the 2018 financial year and 11659 for 2019, including close to 5600 former temporary workers. Another part of the plan involving professional competitive examinations shall equally be validated in the coming days. Lastly, mention must be made of the regular holding of the Joint Promotion Boards.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The entrenchment of the culture of ICTs is inevitable because telecommunications constitute one of the most important sectors of Cameroon's economy, with close to 5% GDP contribution and a mobile telephone penetration rate of about 85%. However, with regard to computer and internet usage, the rates remain low and uneven depending on the geographic location.

Our country needs to bridge the gap and take giant strides towards modernism. The Head of State's vision in this regard, is expressed in his end-of-year address of 31 December 2018: **“It is necessary for us to do more to incorporate digital progress into the functioning of our public services and our economy. The developing digital society will not wait for laggards”**

Cameroon can and must take advantage of this digital transformation to secure its emergence. Building a digital and emerging Cameroon requires boldness, talents and creativity, but also and above all, an adapted and efficient public service. This public service must be composed of qualified, motivated and competent human resources.

As concerns the MINFOPRA, and in a bid to implement instructions from the Head of State, we started brainstorming, as from 11 January 2019, on how to increase the use of digital technology in our ministry. This action involves the Cameroon public administration as a whole and directly or indirectly concern all categories of the population. As a matter of fact, we have identified three axes of digital development. The first is on-line service, to ensure a digital transformation of the Administration by setting up an intranet and extranet to reduce the use of paper and interaction with users through a professional messaging system and a more active presence on social media. The second axis is related to infrastructural development, based on an upgrade of the current computer network, interconnection of the (10) Regional Delegations to afford users nationwide reliable information and finally, use of fourth generation security equipment. The third and

last axis concerns capacity building with training of personnel; training of technical personnel on security equipment in order to best combat cyber criminality has already begun. This series of measures aim to effectively satisfy the expectations of our users and young people, in particular, eager to evolve at their own speed.

To enable us to achieve this and in order to consolidate our achievements in terms of Digital Management of State Human Resources, the President of the Republic, His Excellency Paul BIYA, has thoughtfully granted a special financing worth CFA 510 000000 (five hundred and ten million) francs to MINFOPRA for an urgent upgrading of the IT infrastructure and data safeguarding in the Computerised System for the Integrated Management of State Personnel and the Payroll (SIGIPES1). Moreover, it is worth noting that with regard to integration of digital progress into the functioning of our public services and economy, MINFOPRA, tasked with modernising our Public Administration, has initiated, in conjunction with the Ministry of Finance, procedure to procure a new software package to adapt to the latest technological progress. The procedure is underway and its conclusion will contribute, not only to manage careers and payroll with a single software instead of the current two, but also to undertake systematic digitisation of constituent file documents, the first step in digital archiving expected to culminate into the constitution of a secure data bank.

However, it is deplorable that Government actions are undermined by certain restraints inherent to malfunctions in public services. That is why the President of the Republic, H.E. Paul BIYA, constantly reminds us that **“administration is an indispensable Republican instrument at the service of the State and public interest. Yet, it is regularly criticised by users and our development partners (...). It is good for our administration to continue to be a force for progress”**

Indeed, it remains clear that despite the giant strides made to satisfy users of the Cameroon public service, complaints against the latter still persist. That is why State employees must work harder and promote good governance and innovation to have institutions, procedures, processes, social bodies capable of meeting expectations of the public, mostly made up of youth, and people with ever high standards of expectancy.

Our public service must be resolutely at the service of the user. It must turn its back on the wait-and-see attitude, inertia, opposition to change, racketeering and corruption, to become more efficient, cultivate ethics again, raise its performance to the level of stakes, and focus exclusively on satisfying general interest. We are striving and will strive more and more with the participation of each and every one, to extirpate all symptoms of poor governance in our administrative machinery, to create enabling conditions for the fulfilment of all citizens. It is a clear-cut imperative such that our youth should no longer be tempted by misery or frustration to venture into legal or illegal immigration. By so doing, we lose our manpower, our creativity, our hope and in one word, our future.

In a context of economic difficulties, secessionist claims, terrorist attacks and identity withdrawals that jeopardise our leaving together, the public service now finds all its meaning, all its legitimacy and all its rationale. Our Public Service must not only play its role to the fullest as melting pot of national unity, catalyst of development, but also continue to contribute in youth counselling, empowerment and advancement. It must not only continue to advocate vocations in all professional trades, but also contribute to the generation and fostering of wealth creators. The Public Administration intends to be at the forefront of innovation and technological progress. In MINFOPRA, we will continue to strive to best accomplish this mission of the public service, for it to be true and constant that **“At MINFOPRA, the user is King”**.

**Joseph LE**

**Minister of the Public Service and  
Administrative Reform**