

REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON

Peace – Work – Fatherland

REPUBLIQUE DU CAMEROUN

Paix – Travail – Patrie

SPEECH

BY

MR LAURENT ESSO

MINISTER OF STATE

Minister of Justice and Keeper of the Seals

AT THE OPENING CEREMONY

**ON THE CONSULTATION WITH THE
BAR ASSOCIATION**

YAOUNDE THE 22TH NOVEMBER 2016

**The Minister of Public Service and Administrative Reform,
The Minister Delegate at the Presidency of the Republic in
charge of the Supreme State Audit,
The Minister Delegate to the Minister of Territorial
Administration and Decentralization in charge of Councils,
Mr. President of the Bar Association,
Mr. President of the General Assembly of the Cameroon Bar,
Former Presidents of the Bar,
The Former President of the General Assembly of the Cameroon
Bar,
Dear Lawyers, Bailiffs and Notaries Public,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Distinguished guests,**

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you in the conference room of the Ministry of Justice.

I would first of all like to thank you for honouring the invitation to attend this consultation.

Although the agenda of our meeting is included in the said invitation, permit me to recall that during our deliberations we will examine issues relating to the:

1. Supervision and training of Advocates-in-training as well as Practice at the Bar (Presentation by The President of the Bar);
2. Setting up of a Law School (Introductory remarks by the Director of Judicial Professions);
3. Modalities for implementing the OHADA Uniform Acts (Introductory remarks by the Director of Legislation);
4. The Implementation of Uniform Acts in the Jurisdictions of the North West and South West (introductory presentations by the Procureurs General of the Courts of Appeal, North West and South West);

5. Debates;and
6. Miscellaneous.

On the first point, I must say that not long ago, precisely on 18 December 2014, the President of the Republic absorbed some five hundred (500) Judicial and Legal Officers into the corps of Judicial and Legal Services.

During the last Heads of Court meeting, held on 18 and 19 August 2016, we discussed the supervision of young Judicial and Legal Officers and their participation in the functioning of the courts.

The relevant presentations were made by Procureurs General of Courts of Appeal.

While some 1453 Advocates-in-training are being trained, after passing the Bar Part I Examination of 24 October 2014, the Ministry of Justice which is the supervisory authority of the Bar would like to be informed on their supervision and training; more generally, the Ministry of Justice would like to be informed on the main features of Practice at the Bar which Bar is presently composed of some 3,539 stakeholders; including 2,086 Advocates and 1, 453 Advocates-in-training as I said earlier.

Given that the issue of training and capacity building of judicial stakeholders is acute and directly affects the smooth functioning of courts, the Ministry of Justice started carrying out, some time ago, a study on the setting up of a Law School.

This study was carried out in collaboration with the Bar Council, the National Chamber of Notaries Public and the National Order of Bailiffs and Enforcement Agents of Cameroon.

This study is ongoing.

The Director of Judicial Professions will brief us on the state of this issue in an introductory presentation that will constitute the second item on the agenda.

At the third item on the agenda, we will also examine the modalities for the application of OHADA instruments including The Port Louis Treaty (Mauritius Island) of 17 October 1993, the Treaty of Quebec (Canada) of

17 October 2008, OHADA Uniform Acts and Regulations adopted since 1997.

The Director of Legislation will present an introductory talk on this item.

The Procureurs General, of the North West and South West Courts of Appeal, will equally review the implementation of the OHADA instruments in the courts of the respective jurisdictions under their control in the 4th item on the agenda.

This will be followed by debates and we will exhaust our agenda by addressing some miscellaneous issues.

I will issue a statement at the end of the deliberations.

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Permit me, before I close my remarks, to present the personalities accompanying me in this discussion.

The Minister of Public Service and Administrative Reform, Mr Michel Ange ANGOUING is a First Group Super Scale Legal Officer. The Minister of Public Service and Administrative Reform is the supervisory authority of the most prestigious training school for State employees.

This school trains Judicial and Legal Officers, and Court Registrars. We can learn from his experience, gained in training senior State Executives, by associating him in this discussion.

The Minister Delegate at the Presidency of the Republic in charge of the Supreme State Audit, Mrs Rose FOMUNDAM NGWARI MBA ACHA, is a Second Group, Super Scale Legal Officer.

Before her appointment to this prestigious position, Mrs FOMUNDAM was President of the Administrative Court, North West, Bamenda.

She is still a member of the Committee for proofreading the draft translation in English of OHADA Uniform Acts set up since 2009 and updated in February 2012.

The Minister Delegate to the Minister of Territorial Administration and Decentralization in charge of Councils,

Mr Jules Doret NDONGO, is a Super Scale Senior Civil Administrator.

Mr Minister, it was drawn to my attention that law enforcement officials intervened during a protest by some advocates in the streets.

The Minister of Territorial Administration and Decentralization is the Boss of Governors, Senior Divisional Officers and Divisional Officers who, in the respective jurisdictions under their control, are responsible for maintaining order.

Your presence is useful to us during this consultation.

To complete this presentation, I would like to acknowledge the presence of two members of the Higher Judicial Council in this conference room: Mrs FOFUNG Justine NABUM spouse WACKA, Judge at the Supreme Court and Mr. ELOUNOU Barnabé, Member of Parliament.

There are equally judicial staff among us, who are also directly concerned by the issues on the agenda, notably Legal Officers working in the Ministry, some Heads of Court of Appeal and their main collaborators.

I also acknowledge the presence of some Advocates with a parliamentary mandate, notably:

- Barrister TABE TANDO, Senator;
- Barrister MBAH NDAM, Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly;
- Barrister MBIAM Emmanuel, Deputy Chair of the Constitutional Laws Committee at the National Assembly;
- Barrister FOTSO CHEBOU Fostine, Member of Parliament; and
- Barrister DISAKE born EKOKA Margueritte, Member of Parliament.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the presence of our friends from the national and international media, who show interest in judicial issues and who are attending this brief opening ceremony.

I sincerely thank them for the concern.

I will now suspend our deliberations for a moment, in order to enable them return after about two hours to listen to my statement at the end of our deliberations that will hold in camera.

Deliberations are suspended and will resume in about ten minutes.
I thank you for your kind attention.