

Under the distinguished chair of **the Prime Minister, Head of Government, Chief Ephraim INONI**, the first Cabinet Meeting for 2009 was held today Wednesday, 28 January 2009, as from 11:00 a.m. in the Prime Minister's Office. In attendance were the Vice-Prime Ministers, Ministers of State, Ministers, Ministers-Delegate as well as the Prime Minister's close aides.

Three items featured on the agenda, namely:

1. a statement by the Minister of State for Posts and Telecommunications on "**opportunities linked to the use of fibre optics**";
2. a statement by the Minister for Public Health on "**the situation of measles in Cameroon**";
3. a report by the Minister for Sports and Physical Education on "**the state of progress of the National Sports Infrastructure Development Programme**".

In his statement, the Minister of State for Posts and Telecommunications presented an overview of progress Cameroon has made in deploying fibre optics, a high-quality, high-capacity data transmission medium before indicating the opportunities that this harbours for the State and the private sector.

His statement revealed that fibre optics – which reaches Cameroon through Douala via the SAT-3 submarine cable – was installed along the entire 900km route of the Doba-Kribi Pipeline, with 14 activated output points. The laying of its cable is two-thirds complete between Bafoussam, Douala and Yaounde, the last two cities further benefiting from a home loop. Similarly, inter-connection is effective on the Douala-Kribi-Lolodorf axis, corresponding to 285km.

The Minister of State indicated that the objective is to increase fibre optics' share to the backbone which, to date, is dominated by hertzian and satellite communication, and thus offer Government services, businesses, internet service providers, telephone operators, and radio and television broadcasters the necessary additional capacity for expanding their activities.

Broaching the concrete benefits derived from fibre optics, he cited *inter alia*, distance learning, distance medicine and electronic commerce as well as the different applications of electronic government, prefigured by the interconnection of 26 ministries through the Integrated System for the Computerized Management of State Personnel and Payroll (SIGIPES). The extension of this substructure should, in the medium term, make our economy more attractive, foster a drop in communication charges and lead to wider integration of the sub-regional network.

At the end of the ensuing discussions, the **Prime Minister** instructed that the construction of the national fibre optics backbone be accelerated and that the instrument setting up the infrastructure company responsible for its management be finalized.

Taking the floor for his statement, the Minister for Public Health indicated that "**the situation of measles in Cameroon**", was marked by a

resurgence of the disease in the Far-North region with the influx of refugees, whereas the trend nationwide showed that measles had largely been contained after the immunization campaigns organized in 2002 and 2006. Thus, 228 cases and 8 deaths were recorded in the Far North Region in 2008, to which should be added 159 cases identified between 1 and 20 January 2009.

The Minister for Public Health observed that this situation had prompted the Government in April 2008 to advance date of the three-year immunization campaign initially scheduled for June 2009 to 26 January 2009 in the North Region.

At the end of this presentation, the **Head of Government** instructed the Minister for Public Health to increase the number and equipment of operating medical teams in order to improve the care given to patients. He further asked him to make thorough preparations for the June 2009 national immunization campaign against measles in order to achieve the goal of vaccinating four million children aged 9 months to 5 years.

Taking the floor last, the Minister for Sports and Physical Education presented a report on '*the state of progress of the National Sports Infrastructure Development Programme*' drafted in compliance with an instruction of the Cabinet Meeting of 27 April 2006 – a programme which will enable the construction of stadia and neighbourhood sports facilities throughout the national territory.

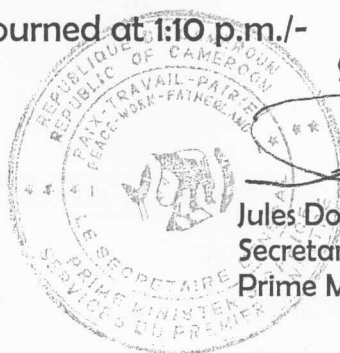
He informed the Cabinet that the first phase of the programme, concerning Yaounde, Douala, Bafoussam and Limbe, was on track, as evidenced by the completion of aspects dealing with the securing of land and preliminary geo-technical studies as well as the financing of site development works and the compensation of populations to be displaced. The completion of this phase will enable Cameroon to tender its candidature for the organization of certain competitions like the All Africa Games and different African cup competitions.

Regarding financing of the project, the Minister in charge of sports revealed that the financial file was currently under review, due to the constraints stemming from the global financial crisis.

At the end of the report, the **Prime Minister** asked the Minister for Sports and Physical Education to liaise with the Ministers in charge of the economy, finance and external relations, to continue and conclude negotiations with the Chinese party, the objective being the signing of the loan agreement and the start of works in 2009.

The Cabinet Meeting ended with the examination of sundry matters having to do with Governmental activities.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:10 p.m./-



Yaounde, 28 JAN 2009

Jules Doret NDONGO,  
Secretary-General of the  
Prime Minister's Office