

PRESS RELEASE

The **Prime Minister, Head of Government, H.E. Joseph DION NGUTE**, this Thursday, 7 May 2020, chaired by videoconference, the weekly meeting of the Inter-ministerial Committee in charge of evaluating and monitoring the implementation of Government's response strategy against the COVID-19 pandemic in Cameroon.

Discussions during this meeting focused on the following issues:

- an update on the evolution of COVID-19 in Cameroon;
- the progress of the local production of medicines and other protective gear;
- Cameroon-France bilateral cooperation in the fight against COVID-19;
- arrangements to implement economic support measures for sectors in difficulty.

At the end of the reports presented on these points by the competent Ministers, the following observations were made:

1. With regard to the evolution of the coronavirus in Cameroon, **2,265** cases have already been recorded. To date, **1,221** people have been healed while **86** others have died. The deployment of specialized teams from the Ministry of Public Health on the field is continuing and measures have been taken to reinforce the stocks of personal protective gear and care for the sick.
2. **With regard to the process of local production of medicines and other protective gear**, the Minister of Scientific Research indicated that 50% of locally produced products are already available. The supply in the coming days of the ordered inputs, as expected, should speed up the local production of medicines.
3. **With regard to Cameroon-France bilateral cooperation in the fight against COVID-19**, the Minister of External Relations indicated that it is in three major areas, namely: support for research-action, strengthening the response capacities of public

administrations, and support for local production of medicines and protective gear.

4. **As for the modalities to implement economic support measures for sectors in difficulty**, the Minister of Finance said that CFAF 15 billion has already been mobilized for the clearance of VAT credits. Exemptions relating to the tourist tax, the withholding tax and the axle tax are already in effect. In addition, circulars are being prepared to specify the implementation modalities of other business support measures taken by the Head of State.

During the discussions that followed these presentations, the Minister of External Relations communicated the indicative programme for the repatriation of Cameroonians in distress abroad.

At the end of the discussions, the Head of Government gave the following general instructions:

- To the **Minister of Territorial Administration**, to instruct administrative authorities to specifically ensure compliance with the regulations regarding the opening and closing hours of bars;
- To the **Minister of Communication**, to intensify awareness-raising among the population in order to encourage them to adopt more responsible attitudes, particularly in commercial areas and places open to the public.
- To the **Minister of Decentralization and Local Development** to consider the possibility for Mayors or Municipal Councillors to issue orders or decisions, as the case may be, sanctioning the failure to wear masks in public places within their territorial jurisdiction;
- To the **General Delegate for National Security and the Secretary of State in charge of the National Gendarmerie**, to maintain and strengthen controls aimed at avoiding overloading in public transport.

Specifically, the Prime Minister instructed:

- To the **Minister of Public Health**, in conjunction with Governors of the Regions, to intensify actions aimed at optimising the care of infected persons, the containment of persons at risk and the active search for suspicious cases within the community;
- To the **Minister of Scientific Research and Innovation**, to finalize by next week latest, the steps taken for the local production of all protective gear and medicines;

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- To the **Minister of External Relations**, in liaison with the Minister for the Economy, to continue the negotiations started with the French side regarding support for the fight against COVID-19;
- To the **Minister of Finance**, to speed up the effective and full implementation of the economic support measures decided by the Head of State.

In conclusion, the Head of Government stressed that the easing measures taken by the Head of State on 30 April 2020 do not mark the end of the COVID-19 health crisis, and should in no way lead to complacency on the part of the population.

He called on members of Government to remain mobilized and committed to the fight against this disease, and to ensure that the population continues to observe barrier gestures, in particular the systematic wearing of protective masks and respect for social distancing, in all areas open to the public.-

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Yaounde, the 07 MAI 2020

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