

**PRESS RELEASE FOLLOWING THE 27th SESSION
OF THE NATIONAL ROAD BOARD**

OF THURSDAY 13 JUNE 2024

Yaounde, 13 June 2024

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Presided by the **Prime Minister and Head of Government, His Excellency Joseph DION NGUTE**, the 27th session of the National Road Board (CONAROUTE) held on Thursday, 13 June 2024, at 2:00 pm in the auditorium of the Prime Minister's Office. The main theme of the session was "*Bypasses of Major Cities and Their Financing Mechanisms*".

The following items featured on the agenda:

1. presentation by the Minister of State Property, Surveys, and Land Tenure on "the delimitation of urban perimeters of major cities";
2. presentation by the Minister of Housing and Urban Development on "the development strategy for connecting structures between the urban network and the bypasses of major cities: the specific case of the city of Yaounde";
3. report by the Minister of Public Works on "capitalising on lessons learnt from the technical and financial maturation of projects to develop the Douala and Bamenda bypasses".

After his introductory statement, the Chairman of the Board gave the floor to the Permanent Secretary of CONAROUTE to present the report on the status of implementation of the instructions issued during the 26th session of this body.

Taking the floor next, the **Minister of State Property, Surveys, and Land Tenure** stated that the demarcation of urban areas is a process governed by laws and regulations in force. This operation is crucial due to the spatial growth of major cities. Its aim is to establish boundaries for an area, allowing it to be recognized as a distinct territory. This process is legally mandated either by an order of the Minister responsible for State property, by the State or the relevant council, and conducted in consultation with the Ministers in charge of town planning or urban issues, as appropriate.

The procedure for demarcating urban areas is divided into three phases: (1) *starting the procedure*, (2) *work of the demarcation commission*, and (3) *issuing the classification deed, in accordance with the provisions of Decree No. 79/189 of 17 May 1979, to regulate the demarcation of urban centres*. Once these prerequisites are met, a decree from the **President of the Republic** finalizes the classification procedure for the town concerned and determines its new perimeter.

Speaking after this, the **Minister of Housing and Urban Development** indicated that the city of Yaounde, given its demographic weight, geographical location, and multiple functions, is undergoing a process of metropolization. Located at the heart of the urban corridor that links eight Central African capitals over a distance of approximately 2,000 km, Yaounde faces rapid urban growth and population densification. In this context, bypasses play a crucial role as alternatives to traditional routes through city centres. These roads help to (i) *reduce congestion and improve urban mobility by diverting local traffic*, (ii) *enhance sub-regional integration by diverting sub-regional transit traffic*, (iii) *improve the safety and comfort of users of the city's primary network and optimize the attractiveness of cities*, and (iv) *facilitate trade and the local economy by ensuring the smooth flow of goods and people around major cities*.

The Yaounde bypass, which is scheduled to start in 2025, is intended to enhance several other major projects that cross it. By way of illustration, the first phase of the Yaounde-Douala motorway and the rehabilitation of National Road 15 (Batchenga-Ntui-Yoko-Lena-Tibati) will enable sub-regional transit traffic to be diverted, while guaranteeing road users optimum traffic comfort.

Taking the floor, the **Minister of Public Works** focused his presentation on the concept of the technical and financial maturation of projects, its scope, challenges, and the lessons learnt from the maturation of the Bamenda and Douala bypasses. He also highlighted that this process is legally governed by Decree No. 2018/4992/PM of 21 June 2018, issued by the Prime Minister, Head of

Government, which lays down the rules governing the maturation process of public investment projects. The maturation of a project refers to the process during which it is conceived, developed, and planned, ensuring its sustainability upon execution.

He also pointed out that the Government has already identified several bypass projects for the towns of Maroua, Garoua, Bamenda, Kumba, Douala, and Edea. The Douala bypass project, in particular, is designed to relieve traffic congestion by providing a direct link between the Yaounde-Douala motorway and the future Douala-Limbe motorway, or between National Road No. 3 and National Road No. 5 for transit traffic.

Regarding the Bamenda bypass project, the Board noted with satisfaction the ongoing rehabilitation of the Babadjou-Bamenda road, supported by the World Bank. The project has an execution rate of 61% and is scheduled for completion in December 2024.

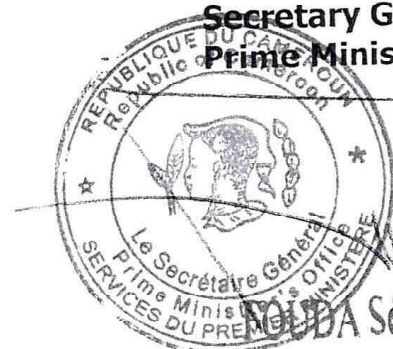
Drawing on the lessons learnt, the Minister of Public Works indicated that among the prerequisites for maturing projects are: ensuring the systematic transmission of concessionaires' network plans to road infrastructure project owners within required deadlines, allowing installation within project rights-of-way; addressing issues related to the evaluation, budgeting, and coverage of taxes and customs duties for jointly financed road projects; and strengthening the respect for the role of the State Engineer in the field of road infrastructure.

After the ensuing discussions, **the Prime Minister** instructed the Minister of Public Works (**MINTP**) to conduct, starting from the 2025 budget year, studies in collaboration with all stakeholders dedicated to developing bypasses and gateways to major cities, excluding Yaounde, where work is already underway. The Minister of Housing and Urban Development (**MINHDU**) was tasked with initiating, in collaboration with relevant administrations and councils, operations to delimit the urban perimeters of major cities (Yaounde, Douala, Bertoua, Garoua, Maroua, Ngaoundere, Ebolowa, Bafoussam, Bamenda, and Buea). The Minister of State Property (**MINDCAF**) was instructed to secure the legal rights-of-way for the bypasses by issuing the necessary Declarations of Public Utility (DUP). **MINEPAT** was tasked with continuing its efforts, in collaboration with **MINFI** and the relevant administrations, to secure financing for the construction of the Yaounde and Douala bypasses, as well as the completion of the urban section of the Yaounde-Nsimalen motorway. Additionally, the **Prime Minister** instructed all Project Owners and Delegate Project Owners to adhere to the combined provisions of decrees governing the maturation process of public investment projects and the terms and conditions for interventions in roads and various networks. These decrees require a synergy of actions between stakeholders in the maturation process for all road projects affecting the networks of public service concessionaires (electricity, water, telephone, fibre optics).

The Board was adjourned at 4: 10 pm.

Yaounde, the 31st 3. JUIN 2024

FOUDA Séraphin Magloire
Secretary General,
Prime Minister's Office



FOUDA Séraphin Magloire