

**REPUBLIQUE DU CAMEROUN**  
**Paix- Travail- Patrie**

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**MINISTERE DE LA DECENTRALISATION**  
**ET DU DEVELOPPEMENT LOCAL**  
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**REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON**  
**Peace-Work-Fatherland**

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**MINISTRY OF DECENTRALIZATION**  
**AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT**  
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**SOLEMN OPENING OF THE 4TH NATIONAL SOLIDARITY  
AND SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP WEEK (SESES)**

**AN ADDRESS BY H.E. GEORGES ELANGA OBAM**  
**MINISTER OF DECENTRALIZATION AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT**

***Salle des Actes of the Yaounde City Council***

**8 December 2020**

- ***Excellencies;***
- ***Ladies and Gentlemen;***

Cameroon is strongly committed to the process of fast-tracking and deepening decentralization, under the leadership of the **Head of State, His Excellency Paul Biya**, who has made this public policy a major pillar in his vision of society.

Indeed, at the beginning of the "Greater Opportunities" seven-year term of office, he prescribed that firm measures be taken to enable regional and local authorities to more than ever before, play their role as nurseries for fighting poverty at the grassroots level, as areas of economic opportunity and as melting pots of local democracy, the ultimate goal being to improve the living conditions of the population.

Achieving this objective clearly requires the promotion of strong, sustainable and inclusive local development. This points to the goal of the activity that brings us together today.

Indeed, it is clear that an appraisal of the exercise of powers transferred to the social affairs sector since 2010, i.e. ten years ago, will undoubtedly enable us to capitalize on good practices, correct shortcomings and better project ourselves in a context where all eyes are on regional and local authorities.

It will also be a matter of better preparing the process of transfer and exercise of powers in social matters by the regions, which are currently

being set up, following the very first elections of regional councillors held on last 6 December.

- ***Excellencies;***
- ***Ladies and Gentlemen;***

Since 2010, up to 63 powers have been transferred by the State to councils.

In the social affairs sector, 3 powers are concerned, namely:

- Providing aid and assistance to the needy and poor;
- Participating in the upkeep and management of social advancement and reintegration centres;
- Assisting social institutions.

Beyond the powers concerned, the challenge remains taking into account vulnerability in the exercise of all powers in areas necessary for economic, social, health, educational and sports development.

This exercise must be carried out with the full involvement of communities, particularly socially vulnerable people, in accordance with the provisions of the General Code of Regional and Local Authorities, which makes citizen participation one of the innovations of the modernized legal framework of decentralization.

Also, it is essential that regional and local authorities benefit from technical, financial and material support necessary to exercise the transferred powers, as enshrined in the aforementioned General Code.

That is why I once more welcome this initiative from the Ministry of Social Affairs, whose long existence makes it possible to identify bottlenecks, sticking points, ambiguities and difficulties of all kinds that still hinder the optimum exercise of transferred powers.

To remedy this, your discussions and reflections should result in concrete proposals, but also and above all, make it possible to envisage remedial measures for each of the players, councils, central and deconcentrated services, support structures and regulatory bodies, for the effective exercise of powers transferred in the social affairs sector.

On that note, I wish you a fruitful session.

Long live decentralization,

Long live Cameroon.

Thank you for your kind attention.