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PRESIDENCE DE LA REPUBLIQUE
SECRETARIAT GENERAL
SERVICE DU FICHIER LEGISLATIF ET REGLEMENTAIRE
COPIE CERTIFIEE CONFORME

PRESS RELEASE

Following the rail accident which occurred on 21 October 2016 at Eseka, the **President of the Republic, His Excellency Paul BIYA** on 25 October 2016, set up a Commission of Enquiry under the authority of the Prime Minister, Head of Government.

The said Commission was tasked with (i) determining the causes of the accident and proposing measures aimed at reducing risks of similar disasters in the future, (ii) apportioning blame for the accident and, (iii) assessing the management of this disaster and of victim assistance as well as making any helpful suggestions related thereto.

The Commission of Enquiry enlisted the services of qualified international rail accident experts. It conducted an elaborate review of multiple reports and documents, as well as hearings and trips to the accident site.

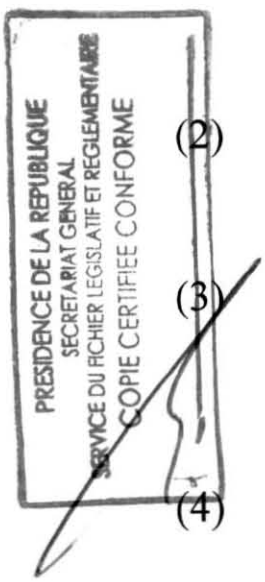
Based on its investigations, the Commission of Enquiry established that the rail carrier CAMRAIL was mainly to blame for the derailment of Intercity Train No. 152. The enquiry report concluded that the main reason why the train's coaches overturned was over speeding (96 km/h) on a rail section with an extremely low speed limit (40 km/h) as well as a steep slope and several sharp bends. According to the experts, such over speeding is due to CAMRAIL's non-observance of some safety rules. Indeed, Train No. 152, which was put into service that very day, had major abnormalities and defects, notably:

- overloading of the train and undue extension of the rake;
- use of passenger coaches several of which had defective braking systems;
- use of a motor carriage whose rheostatic braking system was not in working order;
- no proper pre-departure inspection in Yaounde of the rake's brake continuity; and

- refusal by hierarchy to take into account the reservations expressed by the train driver about the abovementioned abnormalities and defects.

The Commission of Enquiry also concluded that the capacity of Government services to conduct rescue operations during disasters must be enhanced for greater responsiveness, coherence and fluidity and for better victim management.

After taking cognizance of the findings of the Commission of Enquiry, the **President of the Republic** has prescribed the following measures:



(1) review of the concession agreement signed on 19 January 1999 between the State of Cameroon and CAMRAIL corporation, and of the two amendments concluded in 2005 and 2008;

(2) opening of discussions among CAMRAIL partners for stronger State presence in the said corporation and greater focus on social aspects, notably in passenger transport;

(3) short-term establishment of the railway heritage management company provided for under the said Agreement, responsible for maintaining the railway network, as well as implementing railway modernization and extension projects;

(4) inflicting appropriate sanctions on the officials held responsible for the accident, in the enquiry report;

(5) forwarding the enquiry report to the judicial authorities for all legal intents and purposes.

Regarding the situation of the accident victims, the **President of the Republic** has taken cognizance of CAMRAIL's actions undertaken or planned to compensate the families of the deceased and provide financial assistance to the injured. He urges that the process be finalized at the earliest opportunity.

The **President of the Republic** has decided to disburse the sum of CFAF one billion (1,000,000,000) as supplemental assistance to the victims and their rightful claimants.

Furthermore, he has ordered the erection of a stele in Eseka to commemorate this tragic accident.

With a view to improving emergency management by government authorities, **the President of the Republic** has ordered the enhancement of the national major disaster and risk prevention and management system through (i) mainstreaming of terrorist act occurrences, (ii) better ownership by stakeholders of their respective roles and of the chain of command, and (iii) regular conduct of full-scale drills.

The **Head of State** has directed the Government to promptly take the actions necessary for the strict implementation of the abovementioned directives.

The President of the Republic, His Excellency Paul BIYA, reaffirms his solidarity with and the entire nation's support to the victims of the tragic Eseka rail accident and the affected persons./-

23 MAI 2017

Yaounde,

Ferdinand NGOH NGOH
Minister, Secretary General of
the Presidency of the Republic