

# **SPEECH BY THE HEAD OF STATE**

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**In response to wishes from the  
Diplomatic Corps**

Yaounde, 5 January 2024

- The Dean of the Diplomatic Corps,

Thank you for the kind words and wishes extended to me and to the Cameroonian people.

Last year, on the same occasion, I decried the lingering adverse effects of COVID-19 and the outbreak of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine on our economies.

We must, alas, admit that while the war in Eastern Europe continues, another deadly conflict sparked off in the Middle East during the year just ended.

At the same time, pockets of tension are on the increase worldwide, in the Red Sea, in South-East Asia, in the Korean Peninsula, etc.

The African continent is not spared either by tensions or conflicts. On the contrary! The situation in Sudan and the Great Lakes region is a serious concern to the international community.

The criminal activities of terrorist groups continue to jeopardize the stability of many countries, in the Horn of Africa, in the Sahel and around Lake Chad. My country, Cameroon, is also a victim.

- Distinguished Members of the Diplomatic Corps,

It is obvious that the increase in threats to international peace and security is negatively impacting the development of many countries and, consequently, the well-being of their people.

It is therefore necessary, as I have pointed out on various occasions, for dialogue and conciliation to take precedence over confrontation and conflict.

It is crucial, for the very survival of Mankind, that arms be silenced and, at last, that the voice of wisdom and reason be heard.

- Distinguished Members of the Diplomatic Corps,

To me, the United Nations Organization, the reasons for whose establishment are worth recalling, should and can play a key role to this end, in spite of the many attempts to weaken it, despite the upheavals it is facing and despite the deadlock that is gradually sapping its requisite reform process.

This explains Cameroon's candidacy for the presidency of the 79<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations General Assembly, for which I am canvassing the support of all of you.

Yes, the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps,

In a world that seems to be going adrift, in a world that seems to revel in paths leading to its destruction, we continue to believe in the United Nations. We continue to believe in the values on which it is based and in the dreams of its founding fathers.

We continue to believe that our common Organization is best placed to lead mankind to overcome passions, egoisms and antagonisms to refocus on what is essential, namely its survival.

Because, as we get lost in futile quarrels, our most precious asset, the Earth, is being threatened.

Climate change is reminding us of our fragility and the need to act together before it is too late.

- Distinguished Members of the Diplomatic Corps,

COP 28, which was held recently in Dubai, is a source of hope. It helped, among other things, to make strides in fossil energy production. Other strides are still required, especially to grant fair compensation to the efforts of developing countries which, as we are aware, account for barely 3% of global greenhouse gas emissions.

Cameroon has taken and will continue to take an active part in this crucial struggle for the survival of Mankind.

It will also continue its relentless march towards progress, with the participation of all its sons and daughters.

I would like to take this opportunity to heartily thank all our bilateral and multilateral partners for their invaluable contribution to our efforts in this respect.

- The Dean of the Diplomatic Corps,
- Distinguished Members of the Diplomatic Corps,

At this juncture, I would like to request you to convey to the High Authorities that you represent, my best wishes for a prosperous New Year. I extend to you and your respective families, my wishes for good health and success in 2024.

Thank you for your attention.