

# **Communiqué of the UK-Cameroon Joint Commission, Locarno Suite, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London, 2 September 2013**

**The Hon Mark Simmonds MP,  
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for  
Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, United  
Kingdom.**

**His Excellency Professor Pierre Moukoko  
Mbonjo, Minister of External Relations,  
Republic of Cameroon.**

1. Today we co-chaired the first-ever UK – Cameroon Joint Commission. This first Joint Commission affirmed our growing relationship, working closely with each other to promote security, peace, stability and prosperity.
2. Ahead of the Joint Commission, the Right Honourable William Hague, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs and His Excellency Professor Pierre Moukoko Mbonjo held discussions on issues of mutual interest.
3. During these two important meetings His Excellency Professor Pierre Moukoko Mbonjo asked his hosts to kindly convey to H.M Queen Elizabeth II and the Prime Minister Right Honourable David Cameron, a message of friendship and profound esteem from the Head of State of the Republic of Cameroon, His Excellency Paul Biya, the Government and people of Cameroon.
4. The United Kingdom and Cameroon enjoy a close relationship, which has deep historic roots and, as our talks today confirmed, it continues to evolve to meet the challenges of a fast-changing world. In an increasingly complex global environment, it is more important than ever that trusted friends co-operate to address common challenges.
5. The importance both our countries place on our strengthening relationship is reflected in the discussions held today in the Joint Commission. These discussions reflect our commitment to practical cooperation on the full range of bilateral issues, including

through the exchange of information and analysis on sub-regional security, education, migration and economic issues.

### **Cooperating for Security and Stability in Cameroon and Central Africa**

6. The UK and Cameroon recognise the importance of Cameroon as a force for stability in the Central African region, and the importance of its economy as the largest in the CEMAC zone. The United Kingdom applauds the Republic of Cameroon for its commitment to a peaceful resolution of the Bakassi dispute. The UK and Cameroon are committed to deepening engagement with partners in the region, and contributing constructively to regional security. We further recognise the importance of stability, for sustained economic growth, and the importance of co-operation on emerging threats including maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea, tackling factors of instability in Central Africa and in the Sahel; and the risk posed by terrorist organisations.
7. We share a common interest in the maintenance of peace and stability, respect for international law, freedom of navigation, and unimpeded lawful commerce. The UK recognised the positive role played by Cameroon as a Board Member of the International Atomic Energy Agency.
8. Our talks today featured a productive exchange on key African Union (AU) issues. We support the AU Peace and Security Council, which under Cameroon's chairmanship has steered careful and balanced agreement on the challenges that Sudan and South Sudan face.

### **Addressing Contemporary Migration Challenges**

9. We discussed our effective working relationship in tackling illegal immigration under the terms of the 2006 returns agreement and acknowledged the agreements proposed by Cameroon on the movement of persons and on the fight against illegal immigration and on the one relating to visa exemptions for diplomatic and service passport holders. We are committed to work closely together to ensure our operational visa services provide an excellent service promoting prosperity between both countries whilst continuing to tackle illegal immigration. In this regard, the Cameroon delegation proposed the re-opening of a visa section in Yaoundé. The UK took note of Cameroon's request.

### **Supporting and Promoting Our Values**

10. The growing relationship between our two countries can be further underpinned by common values, including a strong commitment to education. We note Cameroon's proposed agreement on higher education and we welcome the meetings taking place in the margins of the Joint Commission to consider greater cooperation between UK and Cameroonian institutes of higher education under the auspices of the Association of Commonwealth Universities. We recognised our shared commitment to promoting the new Commonwealth Charter.
11. The Cameroonian delegation informed the UK about on-going efforts and progress registered in the area of democracy, decentralisation, human rights, governance and the rule of law. The UK took note of this and encouraged Cameroon to continue to strengthen their values.

## **Promoting Prosperity**

12. We noted that UK companies are increasingly operating successfully in Cameroon. We discussed how UK companies could continue to support Cameroon's economic progress towards becoming an Emerging Economy. We further discussed the value in measures to increase confidence of investors, including Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement and Double Taxation Agreement and agreed that our officials should continue to discuss these issues. We welcomed the Business Guides produced to assist British businesses looking to work in Cameroon, which have been today published on the British High Commission in Yaoundé's webpages.
13. Our meeting took place in advance of a day of business to business events, which reflect growing commercial co-operation between our two countries. We express our support and encouragement to both UK and Cameroonian businesses, noting that the UK is now a significant foreign direct investor in Cameroon and a strategic partner in supporting Cameroon's goal to become an emerging economy. We note recent private sector engagements in Cameroon notably the launching of biometric passports on 20 August 2013 in partnership with De La Rue; the first on-shore gas project in Cameroon by Victoria Oil and Gas/Rodeo at Logbaba in October 2012; the announcement by Bowleven on 22 May 2013 of agreement to sell natural gas to a chemical fertilizer plant being constructed in Limbe; and progress in the important Katsina Ala/Kpep hydro-electricity project in North-West Cameroon by Joule Africa, all bringing prosperity and jobs to both the UK and Cameroonian economies.
14. We encouraged increased Cameroonian investment in the United Kingdom, given the nature of the UK's open and competitive markets.

## **Taking Forward the Partnership**

15. The two parties decided to renew their efforts to strengthen bilateral relations, under the stewardship of H.M Queen Elizabeth II, Right Honourable David Cameron, and His Excellency Paul Biya. In light of the above, we expressed our commitment to a second Joint Commission meeting to take place in Cameroon in 2015. We directed our officials to take forward work on closer bilateral relations towards that goal.

**Done in London on 2 September 2013**

**For the Government of  
The United Kingdom of Great Britain  
and Northern Ireland**

**For the Government of the Republic of Cameroon**

**Mark Simmonds, MP  
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State  
For Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs**

**Pierre Moukoko Mbonjo  
Minister of External Relations**