

**HEAD OF STATE'S OFFICIAL VISIT
TO THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA**

ADDRESS BY THE HEAD OF STATE :

**MEETING WITH THE AFRICAN
DIPLOMATIC CORPS**

Beijing, 21 July 2011

The Dean of the African Diplomatic Corps in Beijing,

I would like to thank you for your kind words in welcoming me in this great and beautiful country.

Excellencies, Ambassadors,

Ladies and gentlemen,

The meeting with African Ambassadors, worthy representatives of the peoples of Africa, our common land facing so many shared challenges, takes on great importance.

On the occasion of my present visit, as during my previous visits in this great and beautiful country, I am really pleased to spend these short moments with you to touch on our relations with this major partner, the People's Republic of China and on other topical issues which concern us.

From the onset, I wish to extend to you my most cordial greetings and to ask you to send my fraternal best wishes to my counterparts, the heads of State of your respective countries.

I am here, of course, at the invitation of President Hu Jintao. He kindly invited me to a State visit in this great country, which not only has gained the esteem and respect of all, by the marvels of its ancient civilization, but also has succeeded in commanding the admiration of all, by working its way up to the rank of leading world economic powers in record time, thanks to the genius and hard work of the Chinese people.

Through its very fast progress and phenomenal development, China thus managed to raise hope where afro-pessimism seemed to prevail. China is undoubtedly setting a glowing and instructive example of what our countries and people can achieve if they have the will, the faith and the resolve.

Over the years, the People's Republic of China has thus become the focus of all attention.

Of course, Cameroon, like most of your countries, has excellent and fruitful friendship and cooperation relations with China, to the satisfaction of our respective peoples.

Cooperation with China, which was confined in the past to the construction of social and cultural works and to technical assistance, has diversified and intensified. Today, China is present in important sectors like energy, infrastructure and agricultural development.

This new brand of partnership is a good illustration of the south-south cooperation we have always been clamouring for. It is advantageous because it is tailored to our needs, expectations and means. But we think it is only a step in the cooperation and solidarity space between the north and the south which is still to be developed and strengthened, in order to remedy the imbalance and iniquity existing in international relations.

Those are, Ladies and Gentlemen, issues of common interest I discussed with President Hu Jintao and my Chinese interlocutors.

In the face of globalization which has drastically changed old tenets of relations between nations, hence challenging some of our gains, the issue of the place and role of Africa in the world should remain for all a source of permanent concern. In this regard, we can count on the support of friendly countries of Europe or Asia like China. But it is obvious that Africa will really secure its place in the world, only through reinforced union and solidarity of its states. I am convinced that is the only way for Africa to make its voice or views heard and to see its legitimate interests prevail.

This issue on the place and role of Africa in the world does not only concern the economic domain. It is also basically political. For, as you know, the African claim for a fair and adequate representation of our continent in the Security Council is still pending. There again, for this

legitimate claim to be resolved, we must talk with one voice and we must persevere.

But our real challenges are the fight against poverty and underdevelopment; the real fights we have to give priority to and which we must ardently wage are for economic growth, development and progress.

China's outstanding performances show that poverty and underdevelopment are not a curse and therefore, that Africa may also wake up one day. This is not wishful thinking, provided that like China, we pay the price for that, through effort, hard work and determination.

Excellencies, Ambassadors,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for your kind attention.