

007/16

## **Meeting of heads of delegations of the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission (CNMC)**

### **Speech of Mr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas, the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for West Africa and the Sahel and Chairman of the CNMC**

**Yaoundé, 6 June 2016-** Excellence, Monsieur Amadou Ali, Vice-Premier Ministre, Ministre Délégué à la Présidence, chargé des relations avec les Assemblées, Chef de la Délégation du Cameroun,

Excellence, Monsieur Aboubakar Malami, Ministre de la Justice et Chef de la Délégation du Nigéria,

Mesdames, Messieurs les Représentants des Institutions,

Mesdames et Messieurs les Membres de la délégation du Cameroun et du Nigeria.

Mesdames et Messieurs,

Je me réjouis d'être parmi vous aujourd'hui.

Depuis ma nomination en qualité de Représentant Spécial du Secrétaire général des Nations Unies pour l'Afrique de l'Ouest et le Sahel, et Président de la Commission Mixte Cameroun-Nigeria ; c'est la première fois que je préside la réunion des Chefs des Délégations.

C'est pour moi un grand honneur et privilège de participer à cette réunion qui nous permettra, je l'espère, de renouveler nos engagements respectifs afin d'accomplir efficacement notre mandat.

Tout d'abord, permettez-moi de remercier notre hôte, Son Excellence Monsieur Amadou Ali et, à travers lui, le Gouvernement de la République du Cameroun pour l'hospitalité généreuse dont ma Délégation et moi-même avons fait l'objet depuis notre arrivée, ainsi que pour les mesures prises afin d'assurer le succès de cette réunion.

Je tiens également à adresser mes chaleureuses salutations au Chef de la Délégation du Nigéria, Son Excellence, le Ministre de la Justice Monsieur Aboubakar Malami, ainsi qu'à tous les membres de sa Délégation.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Over 13 years have passed since the establishment of the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission pursuant to the joint communiqué adopted at the meeting held on 15 November 2002, in Geneva, between their Excellences Presidents Paul Biya of Cameroon and Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria, and in the presence of the former Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan-

The Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission has distinguished itself as one of the finest, and most successful, examples of the United Nation's exercise of good offices and confidence building measures in the service of diplomacy: it has strengthened friendship and consensus between the two brotherly nations.

The Mixed Commission has effectively managed to complete the withdrawal and transfer of authority in the Lake Chad area, along the land boundary, and in the Bakassi Peninsula.

Concerning the land boundary, you have already reached agreement on a distance of 2001 kilometers. This is a major achievement.

However, some sections along the northernmost regions of the boundary are still to be addressed.

As we know, regrettably, our continuing field assessment is compromised because of the persistent security breaches in those areas.

Fortunately, we have already gathered enough information about the terrain which now allows us to move forward using desktop demarcation, even though it would be preferable to have the option to return to the field.

This desktop demarcation is all the more important in light of the security risks, which also impede the ongoing pillar emplacement projects in the those areas.

I trust that the urgency of the situation will renew our commitment to face these challenges to advance the remaining technical work.

It also remains a priority to offer the needed assistance to the populations affected by the demarcation.

We will accomplish this task with cross-border development projects and other confidence building initiatives: Enhancing cross-border cooperation and social cohesion are essential to our mandate, and are even more important now, in light of ongoing recent security challenges.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Positive results have been accomplished.

To date, some 903 boundary pillars have been already constructed and emplaced along the land boundary.

We will also launch construction for an additional 462 pillars, representing the fourth phase of our pillar emplacement project, as soon as we manage to replenish the demarcation Trust Fund.

Fortunately, the Parties are the major stakeholders and major contributors to this Trust Fund, which is managed by the UN. Heads of the Cameroon and Nigeria Delegations,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today, it is vital to stress the importance of renewing our commitment to galvanize our efforts in resolving all outstanding issues and agree on a comprehensive work plan, so that we may confidently and effectively complete our mandate.

I address you with renewed confidence in this joint enterprise.

It is heartening to refer to statements and words of encouragement offered by both President Biya and President Buhari during their recent meetings - both here in Yaoundé and in Abuja.

They have taken note of the progress made so far and recommitted their governments to the peaceful resolution of this issue, and tasked their delegations to work expeditiously, effectively and with determination to fulfill the mandate of the Mixed Commission.

I commend you for the solid work done over the years, wish us successful deliberations during the course of this meeting.

Bon courage and may we, enjoy continued success as we enter this final phase of our mandate.

Je vous remercie de votre aimable attention

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