

Excellence Dr. Taïga, Ministre de l'Elevage, des Pêches et des Industries Animales ;

Monsieur Mbassa Ndine Roger, Maire de la ville de Douala ;

Monsieur Aboubakary Haman Tchiouto, Secrétaire Général des Services du Gouverneur de la région du Littoral ;

Distingués invités,

Mesdames et Messieurs ;

Permettez-moi tout d'abord d'exprimer ma profonde gratitude à Son Excellence Dr. Taïga pour nous avoir invités mon épouse et moi, afin que nous puissions visiter pour la première fois cette dynamique ville de Douala, capitale économique du Cameroun, pour observer la force commerciale de la ville et l'avancement de la construction du marché aux poissons de Youpwe. Je tiens également à exprimer mes remerciements à Monsieur Mbassa Ndine pour son accueil chaleureux dans cette ville animée.

Following the Covid-19 and Ukrainian situations, the entire world including Africa is facing big challenges including food shortages. Therefore it is very important for Africa to observe how country like Cameroon, the leading food producer in the region, should react.

In this context, Minister Dr. Taïga and his team of the Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Animal Industries has made their wise and far-sighted decision that Cameroon, facing the Gulf of Guinea and abundant with inland water resources, should actively exploit fishery products as a source of animal protein.

I suspect and hope that the Minister's personal experience of having studied in Japan, excuse me, when he was younger, could have been somewhat instrumental for the formulation of this effective Cameroonian fisheries strategy, since Japan, a country with many beautiful rivers surrounded by the sea, is a leading expert when it comes to the fisheries and value chain development including fish markets.

Therefore, this project, "Improvement in Fishing Unloading Facility and Fish Market of Youpwe in Douala City", should serve as a success model of Japan-Cameroon cooperation. This five-year project was launched in December 2017 with the grant from the Japanese government totaling 6.6 billion FCFA.

This project is fully in line with the National Development Strategy 2020-2030 (NDS30), realizing Cameroon's objectives of increasing production in the fisheries sector, improving equipment and infrastructure for the production, processing, conservation and marketing of fisheries products, boosting fish production as well as reducing post-production losses, strengthening fish self-sufficiency, and reducing the fish import dependency in Cameroon.

Let me take this opportunity to commend all the people concerned with this project. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, construction work was suspended for more than one year between April 2020 and June 2021. Thanks to the determination of the Cameroonian authorities, and in particular the leadership of Minister, Dr. Taïga, work on the construction site has resumed and is now progressing hopefully to be completed by January 2023.

I am glad to note that the combined efforts of the Cameroonian and Japanese parties are now bringing this project to a successful conclusion, deepening cooperation and friendship between our two countries fisheries sector. In concluding, let me express once again my deepest gratitude to all these people concerned.

Thank you for your attention.