

## We insist on transformation, Lopes tells Cameroon's Commonwealth Minister

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*Yaounde, 12 Feb 2014 (ECA)* - Sustained growth is important but the transformation of the structure of economies in Central Africa is indispensable for countries of the sub-region to effectively tackle poverty, remarked ECA's Executive Secretary, Mr Carlos Lopes on his first call on Cameroon's government officials in the context of his first working visit to Central Africa. Mr Lopes was received mid-morning by Cameroon's Minister Delegate in the Ministry of External Relations in Charge of Commonwealth Affairs, Chief Dr Joseph Dion Ngute, who expressed the country's gratitude to the initiatives of the Commission in fostering the development of Cameroon in particular and Central Africa in general.

"Of late, we have witnessed increased visibility of ECA's sub-regional office based in Yaounde in its efforts to support our country," said Dr Dion Ngute, who added that the Commission's new thrust on helping its member states with valuable statistics for development was a very welcome agenda.

"That [statistics] has been one of our major weaknesses", the Cameroonian minister noted.

After expressing his gratitude to the Government of Cameroon for the support and warm treatment it has been giving to ECA's sub-regional office stationed in Yaounde, Mr Lopes went on to emphasize the need for Cameroon continue pushing for a growth trajectory of at least 7 per cent while putting premium on resource-based industrialisation and agricultural transformation.

"It is important for your country and her neighbours in the sub-region to remove all constraints to fluid trade," Mr Lopes noted. "The future lies in trade with your neighbours!" he remarked.

Both officials revisited the success story of conflict resolution between Cameroon and Nigeria and hailed it as an example for countries in similar situations to follow.

The visiting ECA official also used the opportunity to remind the Government of Cameroon of its invitation to actively take part in the forthcoming Seventh Joint AU Conference of Ministers of Economy and Finance and ECA Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to be held from 27 March to 1 April 2014 in Abuja, Nigeria on the theme “Industrialization for Sustainable and Inclusive Development in Africa”.