



**MINISTÈRE DE LA COMMUNICATION**  
**MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATION**

# **SPECIAL OPERATION OF CAMEROONIAN DEFENCE AND SECURITY FORCES AGAINST BOKO HARAM IN THE MANDARA MOUNTAINS AND IN NIGERIA**

**Introductory Statement**

**H.E. ISSA TCHIROMA BAKARY**  
**MINISTER OF COMMUNICATION**

*Yaoundé, March 14, 2017*

## **Distinguished Journalists,**

Allow me to thank you for responding to the invitation I sent to you to take part in this exchange, and allow me to also wish you a warm welcome to this press conference to update you on what is going on at the war front against the Boko Haram terrorist group.

In a bid to dismantle the strongholds of the Boko Haram terrorist group, the Cameroonian Defence Forces once again, carried out a large-scale sweep operation along the Cameroon-Nigeria border.

This major operation dubbed “THUNDER 2” was carried out from February 26 to March 7, 2017, under the banner of Sector No.1 of the Multinational Joint Task Force, backed by the “Alpha” and “Emergence 4” operations, and in perfect synergy with the Nigerian Armed Forces.

The first step of this cross-border offensive included a sweep operation on all villages situated along the border, within the Cameroonian territory, over a 50-kilometer distance in the Mayo Sava Division. Secondly, the joint forces at the front undertook to search and boot out the terrorists in their fall backs in the Nigerian territory, some 25 kilometers into the Nigerian territory and some 40 kilometers along the border.

Amid these operations, air raids were launched by helicopters of our Defence Forces on the strongholds of the terrorists in the Mandara Mountains, leading to huge losses incurred by the enemy.

The balance sheet of the operations is as follows:

- Over sixty terrorists were definitively neutralized;
- 21 suspects were arrested and are undergoing investigation with Nigerian Forces and relevant Cameroonian services;
- A Boko Haram refuge camp was completely destroyed in the MANDARA Mountains;
- A fuel depot was completely destroyed;
- A warehouse for explosives was burned;
- The house of a Boko Haram leader which served as meeting camp for terrorists was destroyed;
- Several weapons, 1 vehicle, 8 motorcycles and 49 bicycles and several propaganda material including Boko Haram flags were all seized and destroyed.

These special operations led to the release of over 5,000 persons who were taken hostage by terrorists.

The freed hostages – mostly women, children and the elderly – were taken to the Banki camp for the displaced in Nigeria through Cameroon.

During their transfer, a forty-year old woman gave birth to a baby at the BIR infirmary in KOLOFATA. In the same vein, all the needy received medical care from our Defence Forces before their transfer.

No loss in human life was recorded among the Cameroonian Defence Forces. One of our soldiers, Sergeant HLATSOUNG François of the Rapid Intervention Battalion was wounded, but his life is not in danger.

The **President of the Republic, His Excellency Paul BIYA**, extends to the Defence and Security Forces, the satisfaction and encouragements of the entire Nation in the victorious fight they are leading, in collaboration with all other Armies of the coalition, against obscurantism and barbarity of the Boko Haram criminal horde.

The **Head of State** expresses his sincere and heartfelt congratulations to them on this other victorious operation led against the enemy and urges the Cameroonian people, notably the vigilante committees, to continue to support the administrative authorities as well as Defence and Security Forces.

This is an occasion to hail the excellent relations that exist between Cameroon and Nigeria, as well as their

respective peoples, facing the hardship of this embodiment of cross-border terrorism that they are all determined to definitively track down.

Moreover, the Government commends the perfect synergy in the operations carried out by all the countries of the front line within the framework of the Multinational Joint Task Force in strict respect of the protection of human rights, thereby belying the whimsical claims of some non-governmental organisations alleging that our Defence and Security Forces are systematically violating human rights.

The **Head of State** reiterates Cameroon's firm commitment to relentlessly fight this scourge until final victory, to all friendly countries of the international community backing us in the fight we are leading against this other secular arm of international terrorism represented by Boko Haram.

Thank you for your kind attention