



## SPEECH AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE 15th ANNUAL AFRICAN CASHEW ALLIANCE CONFERENCE

- Mr Babatola Faseru (ACA),
- Honourable Harouna Kabore (Minister of Trade, Industry and Handicrafts) and President of the ICAC,
- Hon. Afriyie Akoto (Minister of Food and Agriculture of Ghana),
- Mr Jean Pierre TRE (Keynote Speaker, World Bank)
- Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of the Government of Cameroon, and on my own behalf, I would like to thank you for choosing Cameroon to address the opening ceremony of the 15th Annual Cashew Conference under the evocative theme of "***A sustainable cashew supply chain for the future***".

➤ Ladies and Gentlemen,

The cashew nut has experienced a remarkable development in Africa in recent years due to the simplicity of its cultivation on the one hand, and the low cost of production, on the other.

The development of this crop is a very good alternative for diversification and improvement of agricultural incomes. Cashew nuts contribute considerably to the economic development of producing countries and to the improvement of the balance of trade of these countries.

As far as Cameroon is concerned, although the cashew industry is still in its infancy, it still offers significant development prospects.

On the basis of the above, the Government has undertaken a series of activities that inevitably contribute to the development of this sector, including

- The development of the value chain strategy for the cashew nut sector in Cameroon validated in October 2018;

- Cameroon's membership of the ICAC in July 2019;
- The creation of the Cashew Development Support Project (PADF-Cashew) in February 2020.

The expected results of this strategy are that: **"by 2023, Cameroon will be visible on the international cashew market with an annual sale of at least 8,000 tonnes of good quality cashew nuts and at least 400 tonnes of good quality cashew kernels"**.

To translate this vision into reality, the Cashew PADF was created with the objective of contributing to the increase in the production of quality cashew nuts at the national level in order to ensure the sustainability of the economies linked to the cashew value chains.

More specifically, the Project will contribute to

- Improving the productivity and competitiveness of the cashew nut sector;
- Creating jobs, especially for young people and women;

- Increasing the income of the stakeholders in the sector on a sustainable basis;
- Participating in the fight against climate change.

In the implementation of its development strategy for this sector, Cameroon, through the PADF-Cashew and other public bodies, plays the role of facilitator creating the enabling conditions for access to factors of production, capacity building of the stakeholders in the sector and establishing the necessary regulatory mechanisms.

In the area of constraints, they include:

- Lack of improved seeds ;
- Limited technical capacity of nurserymen;
- Lack of knowledge of phytosanitary products and treatment methods against cashew pests due to the limited technical knowledge of nurserymen;
- Very low level of cashew nut production;

- Cashew processing and marketing still very rudimentary;
- Poor knowledge of cashew markets;
- Dearth of statistics and economic studies in the cashew nut sector;
- Lack of infrastructure and equipment for processing and storage for marketing cashew nuts;
- Absence of a structured organisation of the actors of the different aspects of the cashew nut sector;
- Absence of cashew researchers.

Achieving the objectives set requires increased mobilisation at all levels. The Government, for its part, is determined to spare no effort towards its success. It is for this reason that, in view of the constraints bedevilling the attainment of its objectives, Cameroon is looking for technical and financial partners to

finance the Cashew Development Support Project as well as to strengthen the capacities of all stakeholders.

The cashew nut sector could not have a better future without international cooperation.

- Long live agriculture and rural development,
- Long live international cooperation;

Thank you for your kind attention.