

## THE MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION'S STRATEGY AGAINST CORONAVIRUS

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### PRESS RELEASE

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In continuation of government measures to prevent and fight against the coronavirus (COVID-19) enacted upon the Very High Instructions of **H.E. Mr. Paul BIYA, President of the Republic** and made public by Chief Dr Joseph Dion NGUTE, Prime Minister, Head of Government, during his solemn declaration of March 17, 2020, Professor Jacques FAME NDONGO, Minister of State, Minister of Higher Education, chaired this Friday, March 20, 2020 from 10 a.m., in room 1036 of his ministerial department, an important meeting devoted to the implementation of the strategy prescribed by the Government, within the Higher Education system.

In attendance were, Heads of Public University Institutions, the Rector of the Pan-African University, the Coordinator of the Inter-Congo-Cameroon University, the Heads of Public Higher Education Establishments with special status (ENSTP, INJS, SUP'TIC, LINAFI, AIMS), two representatives of promoters of Private Higher Education Institutes and senior officials of the central services of the Ministry of Higher Education.

In his special communication, the Minister of State reviewed the issues and challenges that this pandemic poses for Higher Education. He insisted on the urgency of an appropriate and concerted response for the continuation of the 2019 / 2020 academic year, while respecting the requirements of quality assurance, professionalization of training, employability of graduates and distant learning, despite the necessities related to confinement.

Subsequently, the Minister of State gave the floor to Heads of University Institutions for an update on measures taken or envisaged in their respective institutions in the following areas: reorganization of lessons and assessments, research and cooperation, institutional communication and operation of administrative services including Medico-Social Centers, preventive measures against COVID-19, amongst others. Intervening afterwards, senior officials of the central services of the Ministry in turn proposed measures envisaged within the context of interrelated issues related to the 2019/2020 academic calendar, the 2019/2020 examinations and competitive entrance examinations as well as the organization of other University activities: cultural, civic and sporting activities.

At the end of all the sufficiently enriching presentations made during the working session, the Minister of State, Minister of Higher Education, prescribed to the



Heads of public and private, national and international Higher Education Institutions and his collaborators, the following main measures:

**1- At the educational level:** the mobilization of information and communication technologies to continue online training activities thanks to the digital tools available to students, such as the social media and in particular institutional digital platforms for online teaching.

**2- In terms of work-linked training (alternative training):** activities continue in the receiving professional structures according to the procedures prescribed by the establishments concerned (hospitals, companies, etc.) in strict compliance with the measures prescribed by the Prime Minister, Head of the government.

**3- As far as University research** is concerned, it will be limited to essential activities, in compliance with Government regulations on the regrouping of people, in order to avoid a blank academic year. In addition, the defense of thesis and dissertations considered as priority will be done by videoconference before a jury regularly constituted for this purpose by the Head of the University Institution concerned.

**4- Regarding the reorganization of the 2020 examinations and competitive Entrance Examinations, the calendar** as well as the 2019/2020 academic calendar, they shall be reorganized.

**5- Regarding para-University activities,** sports, cultural and civic activities planned for 2020, notably the University Games, FETUC, FETUNEC, the University Academic and Orientation Fair, are postponed to 2021.

**6- As regards preventive health measures,** the decision was made to suspend all activities open to the public; the strict application of measures to protect staff and users (basic protection against COVID-19, hygiene measures recommended by WHO and the Minister of Public Health, etc.); the rotation of staff in order to ensure minimum service in public and private Universities, and the rehabilitation of University Medical and Social Centers (protective and resuscitation equipment, medical ambulances, etc.).

**7- With regard to communication,** it was recommended that awareness-raising methods be intensified within the University Community through the classical and digital media as well as through posters and direct communication.



Yaounde, March 20, 2020

  
Professor JACQUES FAME NDONGO