

Investiture speech of the President of the Republic of Benin

Mr. President of the National Assembly,
Mr. President of the Constitutional Court,
Ladies, Presidents of the constitutional institutions,
Madam Grand Chancellor of the National Order of Benin,
Distinguished members of the Government,
Distinguished members of the Diplomatic Corps,
Honourable Deputies and Members of the institutions of the Republic,
Distinguished Guests,
Dear Beninese compatriots

At this solemn moment I reached the office of the President of the Republic, I would first like to express my deep feelings of pride in the fact. Our country has managed to organize, in a peaceful climate, a presidential election, which the international community and our People welcomed for its regularity and its transparency.

Doing with you the assessment of this exceptional journey, both for you and for me, I would like to recognize and welcome the democratic anchor of Benin and thus prove once again its ability to overcome the challenges that it has always had to face.

However, economically and socially speaking, as well as for the enjoyment of individual Freedom, the current situation is far from being good. The first urgent matters are the political reform, then the restructuring of the national economy and the rebuilding of social links; for this, citizens must regain confidence and the credibility of our country must be restored.

Indeed, the task seems huge but it is not impossible if implemented actions are taken and based on a clear vision as well as on the skills and assets we have.

That's why I will fulfill my unique mandate with all the moral requirements needed in exercising state power with dignity and simplicity.

I will carry out my duties as President with humility, selflessness and sacrifice for the well-being of all. About the nation, I will always keep in mind the conviction that it is one and that it is indivisible, because I am convinced that our country could only be stronger to the condition of remaining united.

I will work every day to keep the commitments in order to make this mandate an instrument of rupture and transition leading to the establishment of large

institutional political reforms called for by all of us. To achieve this, I intend to restore a state of law and respect for democratic principles and freedoms, which ensure effective protection of people and properties.

I will pledge to promote an independent judiciary, the same for all, accessible and effective, and to revitalize and modernize the public administration. The skill will now be the main criteria for promotion of executives in position of responsibility.

I will appoint independent a monitoring body whose main task will be to ensure the financial orthodoxy in all jurisdictions, agencies and state corporations.

I will involve ensuring and preserving the freedom of the press and an equal access for all to public media.

I will assure the protection of private initiative and private sector as the main tool for development.

I will work to improve and strengthen decentralization process by including it in each of the actions I plan to undertake.

I will make our democracy a true instrument of the integration of the international cooperation and of radiation to mobilize resources for the development of our country.

I will work to reduce and eradicate poverty in ensuring, from now on, the protection of the poor and the access for all to water and energy, as inalienable rights and a development factor.

I will give priority to the reorganization of the health system to provide our citizens more effective and more inclusive health coverage.

I will focus on rebuilding the education system to ensure its relevance to the economic ambitions of our country. In this approach, the restructuring of the National Council for Education and the creation of the free zone of knowledge and innovation will be the main lever of government action in this area.

I will make tourism a real instrument of creation for wealth and jobs.

In Agriculture, I am convinced that, for reforms and changes to be made and the means of relevant investment, our country can rise to the rank of regional agricultural power with a large production capacity in sectors of crop production, livestock and fisheries. Therefore, I intend to promote two agricultural key sectors, in particular, by

investing massively, in order to create genuine centers of agricultural and industrial development.

Finally I will fight against corruption at every moment and every day and that does not exhaust the tireless efforts of Justice and civil society aimed to put an ending to impunity. In this regard and to give the necessary guarantees, I declare from this rostrum that not only I am prepared myself, but I affirm that I am ready now and immediately.

Ladies and gentlemen, dear compatriots,

As you see the mandate that brings the augur of happy prospects, I am committed to take concrete actions for the development of Benin, the welfare and the development of our people.

I would like to associate the international community, our traditional technical and financial partners, as well as all people of goodwill in any horizon, who came with great hope then stay alongside our country, at the moment I deal with the challenges of national reconstruction, those of the entrenchment of democracy and the fight against poverty and corruption.

I would be remiss here not to emphasize strongly that the democratic roots of our country largely depend on the supporter system which is ours and on values, together we plan to promote. It is then not without significance to be concerned about the role of money in the political competition and the vote of the electorate. We need to urgently take in account the measure of collective danger, which we are exposed to. In others words, if the democratic state we aspire to build passes through free and transparent elections in a timely manner, citizen's vote as a means of expression of its accession to the democratic idea must be free of any financial or retributive consideration. Here and now, I call our civic consciousness and more citizenship to end the reign of money in politics.

Two other major challenges of our time are terrorism and transnational crime. I will face them with courage and determination by relying on sub-regional cooperation and support of international cooperation. Therefore, our national defense forces and the intelligence services will have to be now engaged to support the public security forces to protect our urban and rural people.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I take the commitment to the Beninese people and before the audience represented here, that under my mandate, the governance at the top of the state will constantly have to commit to seek and identify where they are necessary skills that our country

needs to make in the most efficient manner the necessary responses to the needs of the development and the welfare of our urban and rural people. It is the selection by merit and the adherence to values that make the quality of governance. This selection is more effective if it is based on a real equality of opportunity in recruitment, in competition at public tenders, and yet during recognition and reward the quality of an accomplished work. Now that I committed it for our country, for a new start, together we will overcome fate. I firmly believe we have everything to succeed.

Long life to the Republic of Benin.

Thank you!