

Paramount Chief of Buea

MOLATAKO – EYOLE - EYOLE NA MORZANGO (UNITY – PEACE – TRUTH AND JUSTICE)

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SPEECH BY THE PARAMOUNT CHIEF OF BUEA, ON THE OCCASION OF HIS CORONATION CEREMONY

Wonyamoe eh, Eyole na inyo

Your Excellency the Minister of Territorial Administration and the special representative of the PM

Your Excellency the Governor of the SWR

Members of the HOS's cabinet here present

H.E. Peter Mafany Musonge, former PM

The Vice-Chancellor of the University of Buea

The President of the Regional House of Assembly

The Senior Divisional Officer

Judicial authorities

The Consul General of Nigeria to the SW and NW Regions

Mayor of Gbea

The Divisional Officer of Buea

Members of parliament

Political leaders

Your majesties and religious authorities

Guests and dignitaries



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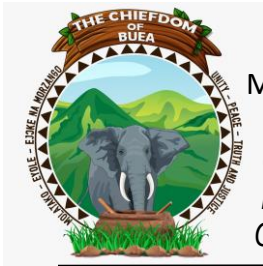
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Ladies and gentlemen

OUR UNITY IS OUR STRENGTH

I want to thank everyone who has come to watch and take part in this great coronation ceremony. We, the Bakweris, Wakpes, are indeed grateful for your generous contributions that have culminated in this ceremony. We thank the head of state and the prime minister for bestowing me their trust and confidence. I want to also thank particularly, the Wonya Likenye royal family and the living forces of the clan, all my Mokpe brothers and sisters, and mothers and fathers, who still believe that the Mokpe man is not finished yet, that the Mokpe man is not dead; and the people who have worked tirelessly, day and night to bring this day to its full success. Today will be permanently stenciled in the minds of all Mokpe sons and daughters and in succeeding generations as the day Chief Endeley V sat on the throne. It's a great honor and an opportunity for me to lay out my vision for a new dawn in Mokpe land. The outcome of this coronation should be our unity; unity amongst us as Cameroonians but more so, unity amongst us the Mokpes. Unity means, wanting the best for each other; unity means empowering the younger ones; unity means sharing a common vision for our destiny. Unity does not come by accident as you may know; unity is an intentional act to bring the best of each other together for a common purpose. Chief Kuva Likenye's improbable story of defiance and challenge to the German colonial endeavor was not because of his superiority in ammunition; it was because of the unity of the Bakweries during his reign; we do, therefore, have the historical responsibility to show the same unity now. We can overcome our challenges with unity. We can bring back our Mbando with unity. Our mbando is our sacred bond. Our mbando is our unity. With unity everything is possible. One of the priorities of my reign is to see the return of our annual cultural festival called mbando. The bible is right, a people without vision perish. We have a unique opportunity to strengthen our bond as Mokpe men and women. This should be the one ritual ceremony that every child born of a Mokpe parent in any corner of the world looks up to. We, the Mokpes are excellent people and excellent people set high standards for



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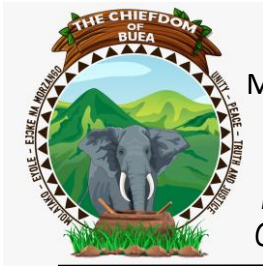
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themselves. I believe we can have an annual mbando ceremony where we rotate the venue between our seven sub-divisions of Fako (Tiko, Limbe 1,2,3, Buea, and Muyuka) on an annual or bi-annual basis. I know we can do this because of our excellence. Excellent people say what they mean, and they mean what they say.

As the mbando kicks off and gains steam, we should consider the construction of a Bakweri Cultural Center; it will also house a Museum and Library. This will be a building that will host multipurpose offices and an event hall. A Menyoli Library or Monangai auditorium within that facility would be a wonderful thing to have. We could have a Musonge ballroom in that facility too. This building will be the testimony of our unity for generations to come, it will be an example to our children. This will be an ideal place for us to put the statues of some of our Mokpe prominent cultural and political icons. This is Buea, the birthplace of the Mt. king, Kuva Likenye. Chief Kuva's story would be the subject of a brilliant introduction to any story about Cameroon's fight for independence. We have a statue that we protect and uplift for a German man, Otto von Bismarck-Schönhausen, the Bismarck fountain; someone who had never stepped foot in Buea, but we have nothing to show for King Kuva Likenye, or Mola Njie Tama Lihvanje, the founders of Buea and its dynasty. We have streets named after prominent political and cultural leaders in other cities, yet we have no single street in Buea named Dr. E.M.L Endeley street. This is very achievable with unity. All we need for this to happen is leadership. Nothing happens without leadership, nothing changes without leadership, nothing develops without leadership, nothing improves without leadership, and nothing is corrected without leadership. Dr. E.M.L. Endeley (my late father), one of the outstanding Bakweri and nationalist leaders had a clear vision for the Bakweri man. In 1952, he as a member of the CDC Board of Directors founded the Bakweri Cooperative Union of Farmers (BCUF) and concluded a market agreement with the CDC management. His vision was to empower the Bakweri man and make them economically independent through the cultivation and export of Banana. This was a resounding success. This scheme gave rise to rapid capital



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accumulation among the Bakweri banana producers. The CDC marketed the BCUFs produce for a while but had to hand over the business after proving incapable of handling the growing amounts. The BCUF went ahead to build and own several buildings in Fako Division. It proved without any doubt that the Bakweri man was capable of undertaking entrepreneurial activities if given the right incentive and assistance. The BCUF succeeded because it had leadership. Remember, nothing succeeds without leadership.

Let me give you another example of great leadership amongst us. I have been a student, employee, and now the paramount chief of a prominent Mokpe lady who carries her integrity in her hands; Professor Limunga la Njeuma; you cannot approach her with anything unlawful or inappropriate for she isn't afraid to stand up for what is right. She exemplifies the excellency in us the Bakweris. She defended Fako lands so passionately, both on national media and in her writings. On one occasion, she even seized the attention of the minister of state property and land tenure, defending the UB land; on another occasion, she called the attention of the Prime Minister of the nation on what she believed were irregularities in the partitioning, sale, and distribution of land in Fako Division. This is a leader who exemplifies what is right, so that young people don't have to look for an example or a role model too far away. On one social media board, someone wrote that: "we salute mami for standing by her people", in another, I read, "We salute you for your stringent outcry of the land-grabbing saga in Fako." I also read someone calling her an extremist for Fako lands. Initially, I was a little offended by the categorization as an extremist. However, as I continued to think about the matter I gradually gained a measure of satisfaction from the categorization. Was Chief Kuva Likenye not an extremist for our lands when he successfully took on the German war machinery and inflicted a humiliating defeat on them at Buea in 1891? Was Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. not an extremist for justice; though threatened with attack dogs, water cannons, and even death yet, he still went on to march in March 1965; Was Nelson Mandela not an extremist for freedom when he offered all of his adult life to prison



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because he cherished the ideal of a free society for the African people, an ideal which he said, "if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die." Was not Jesus an extremist for love: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you."

You may be 46 years old as I happen to be, and one day some great opportunity stands before you and calls upon you to stand up for some great principle, some great issue, some great cause—and you refuse to do it because you are afraid of what they will write about you on WhatsApp; you refuse to do it because you want to live longer; you're afraid that you will be in the bad books of the local authorities, or you're afraid that you will be criticized, or that you will lose your popularity or you're afraid that somebody will stop your salary, and so you refuse to take a stand. Well, you may go on and live until you are 90, but you're just as dead at 46 as you would be at 90! You died when you refused to stand up for what is right, you died when you refused to stand up for your people.

To my fellow Fako chiefs, chieftaincy remains the oldest institution in our land. We have to recapture the sacrificial spirit of the early Mopke chiefs, else we will lose our authenticity, forfeit the loyalty of thousands of our subjects, and the chief's conferences will be dismissed as an irrelevant social club with no meaning for the twenty-first century. We must be the ones to show: kodi ya mbowa; or e ndinge ya mbowa. That is the absolute love of one's homeland above everything else. We must be bold enough to call out when something is so obviously wrong and intelligent enough to provide solutions that solve these problems. Each one of us has to define how he wants to be remembered in connection with what we have contributed to the prosperity of the Mokpe man and woman. We must all leave here today with a new determination, a rebirth of our mission to the Mokpe tribe, and a rekindled spirit of protecting all that belongs to the Mokpes



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jealously. Remember that chieftaincy is not a wrestling match, nor is it a race to become rich. Chieftaincy is an opportunity to serve your people.

Your excellency, state officials here present, invited guests, our brothers and sisters from the diaspora, wonyamoe, as I begin to conclude, I want to say that I believe I am serving God's purpose for me on earth. The word purpose means; original intent, and in the bible, it is defined as the reason for creation. I am, therefore, profoundly secure in my knowledge that I am serving the purpose for which I was created. I may sometimes falter, but my knowledge that God loves me is unshakable, and I am certain He has not worked out a design for my failure. On the premise of my faith, I, therefore, want to say that I hold no anger against anyone who either opposed me or challenged me on my journey to this throne. I have no hate or bitterness in my heart. I believe that if we have to reconcile as a family, reconcile as Mokpe men and women, then, that reconciliation and forgiveness of past wrongs has to begin from me as the custodian and spiritual leader of this tribe.

Long live the Mokpe tribe

Long live the people of Hvako

Long live the Republic of Cameroon

A hvanji ipkili

Oma Nanu

By Chief Dr. R.E.M. Endeley
Paramount Chief of Buea