

My dear compatriots,

President Bongo is gone. We can feel the pain in Libreville, but also from Rabat to Dakar, and from Lomé to Johannesburg.

The man of peace lies at the heart of the country Batéké savannah. Now is a time of contemplation.

We will remember his role as builder. We will always remember his hard work for the unity of Gabon. Thanks to him, our country became a heard and respected Nation, both in Africa, and to the North.

President Bongo bequeathed a rich country, with skilled civil servants, and a young and educated population. He bequeathed modern telecommunication facilities. **He bequeathed a Nation in peace with her border countries, which is rare, and in peace with herself, which is a blessing** for a continent ravaged for the last 40 years by civil wars. Our powerful army is also a guarantee of this success.

Peace and unity are the foundation on which we will be able to build a modern Gabon.

To start this process, the Gabonese people will soon have to vote for the man or the woman they think most dignified to represent them and the country.

This choice will be decisive, because it will bind the country for the next 10 years.

Despite the number of declared candidates, only **two real alternatives** are in front of the people.

The first one is continuity without change. Over the short-term, this does not present a risk because it means more of the same. However, over the long-term it will lead our country into progressive decline, at first within Central Africa, then on the entire continent and finally in the world.

The second option is to choose the path of courage and invest in the future. Because to make Gabon change we cannot use the past as a model. The person who will take charge of this country will have to combine youthful strength with experience of the outside world. As a man of the people, he will know their expectation, their fears and also their hopes.

One candidate stands out. His name is Bruno Ben Moubamba. He is not an heir to the late President, neither is he a candidate of a party. He is not a revolutionary. He is the candidate of civil society, which means of the Gabonese people.

The people have an unknown future ahead of them.

The world is changing. In the United-States, for the first time, a president with African roots has been elected. Everywhere, globalization is making commercial exchanges faster.

Individual nations have to adapt faster and faster to international developments. At the heart of Central Africa, this represents a chance of prosperity for Gabon.

To take advantage of these changes, we have to change. **But change does not mean rupture.**

We must not break-up the former administration, which worked more than 40 years for Gabonese prosperity. On the contrary, we have to do everything we can to guarantee political stability. **National unity and a peaceful transition are necessary to implement better governance in Gabon.**

There will not be a break with France, nor with the United States, or China. Gabon shares 150 years of common history with foreign powers. We decided to keep what was best. The next president will have to maintain those fruitful alliances. The engagements between foreign nations and the former administration will be maintained in keeping with international rules. It is also with this perspective that we want to solve the issue of Mbaníé Island.

The real change that awaits the upcoming president is to improve the everyday life of Gabonese people. This means compelling the State to serve each citizen, and provide a fair distribution of wealth.

These changes will be at the same time modern and moral.

Modernity obliges us to open up Gabon to the world. To this end we will lean on existing infrastructures like the Transgabon railroad, the deep-water harbours and Air Gabon. But we will also launch new projects such as urban roads, public transportation systems, and development of the railways.

As for Morality, this is the natural ally of a modern Nation. Morality underpins the citizen's dignity by guaranteeing their liberty. It will be expressed by a multi-party system and freedom of the press. It will also be expressed by full tolerance for religious diversity and no tolerance at all for corruption. It will also be expressed by the establishment of the presumption of innocence and by making access to lawyers easier for every Gabonese citizen.

In this project, nothing will be improvised. Our vision is that **each Gabonese should know, at all times, where the country stands and in which direction it is heading.**

Because of this project, we have to work first on the improvement of each citizen's everyday life, and living environment. This must be the heart of every action of the new Gabonese administration. It is important to start with works of construction and a waste water system. This will also mean a fight against the proliferation of *matitis*, because each Gabonese has to have his own house, with running water and electricity.

This is why it is necessary to improve access to culture and education. This is why we would like to reinforce professional and academic training. Educated citizens will be the mainstay of a new Gabon.

Everything which has to happen in Gabon will happen with the Gabonese. The spirit which leads us is an open and listening spirit. All the people who work for the country's economic or political life will be consulted in order to realize our project.

We want to work to change the everyday life of each Gabonese. Firstly, we want to change their immediate environment. Then, we want to change their link with the State by bringing the government and its decisions closer to the people.

Gabon is rich; rich thanks to its people, thanks to the oil, the mines and its forests. Gabon does not need one more Euro. On the contrary its economy needs to be protected in order to be more effective.

Firstly, protecting the Gabonese economy means making it less dependent on the price of raw materials. It also means paying back our national debt to the Paris Club. This is possible, thanks to the funds that our country can generate.

Protecting the Gabonese economy means making our Nation self-sufficient in terms of food and energy. This is possible thanks to our resources, our high quality managers and the proper training of technicians. Moreover, possessing a rich and extensive coastline compels us to develop commercial fishing activities.

Having paid off its debts, our rich Nation will once again find the strength to invest and build: outside the country, thanks to a sovereign fund, and inside the country, thanks to a strong public procurement policy that will favour Gabonese contractors. In a country with a reinforced economy, each Gabonese citizen will be able to find the resources that he needs for his own projects. That way, we think that it will be possible for each Gabonese to open a bank account, the first step towards entrepreneurial action.

Specific efforts will be taken to reallocate resources. Priority will be given to spending for health care and the improvement of housing conditions. Furthermore, unnecessary government spending will be stopped.

Finally, our huge touristic potential must be developed by new and attractive infrastructures.

After reinforcing our national economy, we will be able to concentrate on the development of social policy, underpinned by a strong birth policy:

- first, by working to promote entrepreneurship as an alternative to the civil services;
- Then, by improving our educational system by reducing the large number of pupils in each classroom, by reacting more rapidly to student academic preferences, developing boarding schools and training supervisory staff for students in need;
- Finally, by putting in place an ambitious health policy centered on the development of public hospitals and on the establishment of a Gabonese health care system. With this system, health care would be at least partly free. This system will have to be complemented by unemployment insurance. **The worker's security has to be as important as the sick person's security.**

As you know, Gabon has vast potential. Each Gabonese will be part of Gabon's success.

At the heart of Central Africa, the next emerging area in the Continent, Gabon will be able to inspire other countries that have the same size and the same resources. I mean Kuwait, Qatar, and Singapore.

We are going to unite Gabon and change the life of Gabonese people. Together, we are going to build the Gabon of tomorrow.

Long live Gabonese people! Long live Gabon!