



## **Australian High Commission**

**Nigeria**

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# **MEDIA RELEASE**

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## **Australian Government appoints its first Alumni Ambassador in Cameroon**

7 July 2015

“It brings me great pleasure to announce the appointment of Mr Jean-Bertrand Atangana as Australia’s first Alumni Ambassador to Cameroon” said Australian High Commissioner to Cameroon, HE Jonathan Richardson.

“This appointment further strengthens our close ties with Cameroonian alumni of Australian tertiary education institutions, following the successful launch of the Cameroon-Australia Alumni Association (CAM3A) in April this year” he explained.

The Australia Awards Alumni Ambassador Initiative, which was launched in 2013, taps in to the strong Alumni network by creating a cadre of volunteer champions across Africa committed to supporting Australia’s premier capacity-building program: the Australia Awards. The Alumni Ambassadors also promote and represent Australia in their home countries and work to strengthen Australia’s engagement with its growing pool of alumni across the continent.

Mr Atangana, from Cameroon’s Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, was chosen to join Alumni Ambassadors from 13 other African countries in taking on this important voluntary role for a one-year period commencing in July 2015. In early June, the 14 new Alumni Ambassadors participated in a hands-on interactive Alumni Ambassador workshop held in Accra, Ghana.

“The workshop provided us with opportunities to learn new skills and enhance existing ones in the areas of leadership, communication, networking, mentoring, presentation skills and work-plan development,” Mr Atangana reported, while expressing appreciation for his appointment.

As a former recipient of an Australia Awards professional development short course at the University of Sydney, Mr Atangana will assist with promoting and representing the Australia Awards; offer peer support to new Awardees; share experiences about studying and living in Australia; and actively network with other alumni and stakeholders to encourage alumni to contribute to the development of Cameroon upon their return. As the Alumni Ambassador, Mr

Atangana will be a driver and leader of change, not only in his field but across Cameroon, making the most of the experience, knowledge and skills he gained in Australia

Since 2010, a total of 77 Cameroonians have benefited from the Australia Awards, which include both Masters-level scholarships and professional development short courses of up to three months. The Australian Government is committed to keeping in touch with not only former Awardees but all international alumni of Australian tertiary institutions. To this end, the Australian Government was also glad to support the recent establishment of CAM3A, which brings together men and women who graduated from Australian institutes and who are committed to pooling their skills and expertise for the benefit of Cameroon. The establishment of the Association was spearheaded by alumni from the Australia Awards program; however it is open to all Cameroonians who have studied in Australia.

An increasing number of international students, including from Cameroon, choose Australia as their preferred education destination. Education is currently Australia's largest services export and globally, Australia is among the top five destinations for international students, alongside the US, the UK, Germany and France.

“International education generates important people-to-people links that underpin Australia's research, trade, investment and social engagement with the world. It builds shared understandings and new perspectives,” continued High Commissioner Richardson, “It is my hope even greater numbers of Cameroonians choose to study in Australia in the future to further strengthen the ties between our two countries.”

Are you an alumni of an Australian university? Do you want to connect with like-minded Cameroonians and stay in touch with Australia? Find out more about CAM3A on their website ([www.cam3a.org](http://www.cam3a.org)), Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/#!/calumni.linkages?fref=ts>) or via email at [cam3a@cam3a.org](mailto:cam3a@cam3a.org).

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