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# The New Dawn

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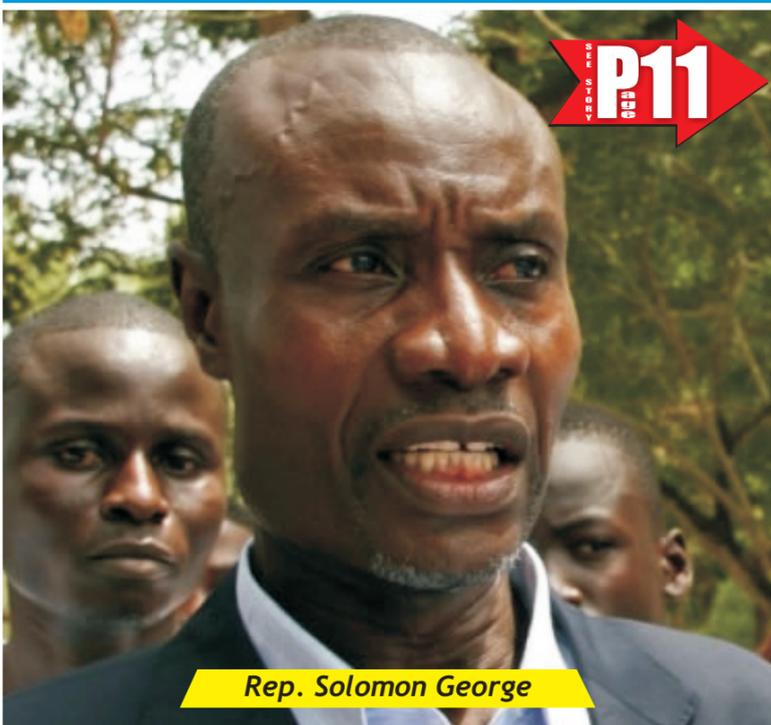
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# My mind is functioning well



Ex-President Sirleaf

## -Ellen denies failed memory claims



Rep. Solomon George

# Father of Zogoes

## -Weah describes Rep. Solomon George



# Continental News

## C. Africa ousted assembly leader vows to wage court fight

The Central African Republic's ousted assembly leader called for calm as he spoke to supporters on Sunday saying he would legally challenge his sacking which has taken on sectarian overtones.

Speaking in his predominantly Muslim PK5 neighbourhood of Bangui, the economic hub of the capital and often scene of violence, Karim Meckassoua protested the censure vote late Friday that removed him from the office of president of the national assembly.

The Muslim politician called for "calm" and for his ouster not to be turned into a debate over religion, but at the same time noted that 38 out of the 41 deputies who voted against him were Christian, an AFP correspondent at the scene reported.

"The fight continues but it is a judicial fight," Meckassoua declared, saying he would take his case all the way to the constitutional court.

In reaction to the move against Meckassoua, the country's mainly Muslim ex-Seleka rebels on Saturday gave government officials in areas under their control an ultimatum to leave within 48 hours. Abdoulaye Hissene, a leader of the former rebels and of the National Defence

and Security Council, which comprises several ex-Seleka armed groups, told AFP the ouster vote was "illegal".

"We think it happened because he's a Muslim," he said.

However, on Sunday, two of the three ex-Seleka armed groups expressed a desire to

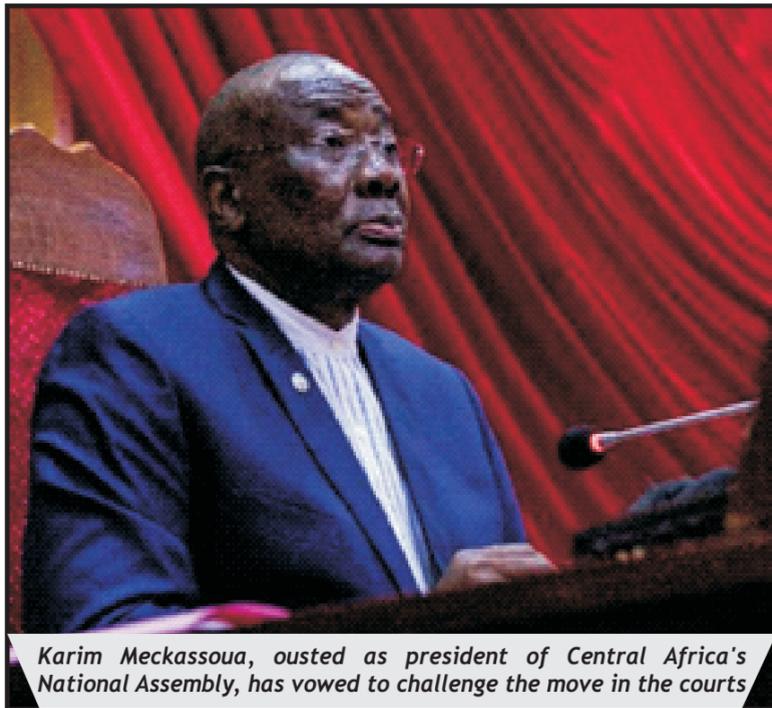
ease the tensions.

The Bangui government has denied any religious motives in the dismissal of the National Assembly president.

"Those who launched the censure procedure raised management problems. At no time was the religious question raised," government

spokesman Ange-Maxime Kazaguhe said Saturday.

After years of confrontation between Muslim and Christian groups, the election of Meckassoua in 2016 was seen as a symbol of reconciliation between communities in the Central African Republic. -AFP



Karim Meckassoua, ousted as president of Central Africa's National Assembly, has vowed to challenge the move in the courts

## Gabon president hospitalised 'due to exhaustion'

Gabonese President Ali Bongo, hospitalised in Saudi Arabia since Wednesday, was taken into medical care after suffering a bout of exhaustion during a trip to Riyadh, his office said Sunday.

The 59-year-old leader was in the Saudi capital for a flagship economic forum when he fell ill, said spokesman Ike Nguouini in a statement.

"The doctors who assessed him said he is suffering from severe fatigue due to extremely high levels of

Initiative forum, but was not seen during the discussion.

Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman visited him in Riyadh's King Faisal hospital that evening, the official Saudi Press Agency said on Thursday.

However in a separate dispatch, SPA said Bongo attended a speech by Prince Mohammed at the conference later Wednesday.

Bongo took over as leader of the oil-rich equatorial African nation in 2009 on the death of his father Omar

## Libya's south falls prey to foreign armed groups

Neglected by rival authorities in Tripoli and the country's east, Libya's southern desert has increasingly become a hideout for foreign rebel groups that stand accused of stoking growing insecurity.

"Kidnapping, theft and

banditry have multiplied" in the region, said Ali Akri Molia, commander of a unit responsible for protecting oil installations in the Oubari area of southern Libya.

He and others blame rebel groups from neighbouring Chad for much of the

insecurity.

Mired in chaos since the fall of dictator Moamer Kadhafi in 2011, two entities now vie for control over Libya -- the Tripoli-based Government of National Accord, and a parallel body in the east.

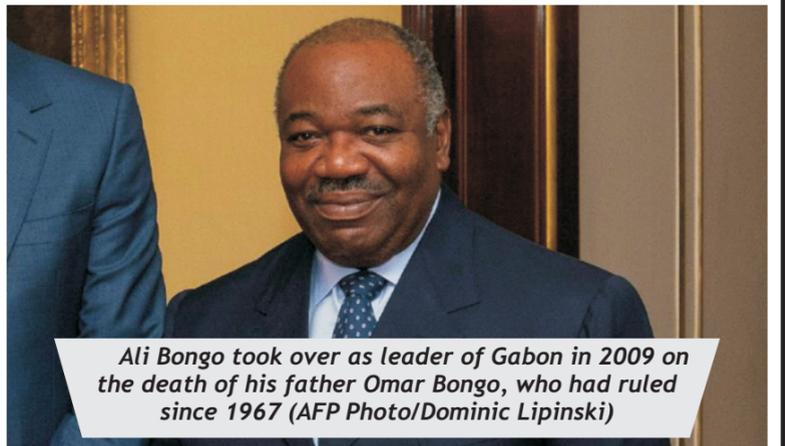
The eastern administration is supported by strongman Khalifa Haftar, who heads the self-styled Libyan National Army (LNA).

Various groups, from jihadists to rebel groups originally from neighbouring Chad and Sudan have exploited Libya's enduring security vacuum.

The rebel factions have established rear bases in Libya and profit from trafficking and other illicit activities to finance insurgencies back home.

The groups benefit from the support of tribal communities, criss-crossing a landscape where dunes are sometimes the only identifying features.

Often on horseback, they ignore borders that for long stretches remain nothing



Ali Bongo took over as leader of Gabon in 2009 on the death of his father Omar Bongo, who had ruled since 1967 (AFP Photo/Dominic Lipinski)

activity in recent months," he said.

Bongo is feeling better and has been told to rest, Nguouini added, while calling for "vigilance" against "fake news" following false reports of his death.

A Cameroon TV station had announced live on air on Saturday that the Gabon president had died, without providing any evidence, he said.

Bongo was scheduled to appear Wednesday on a panel at the Future Investment

more than imaginary lines in the sand.

The Tubu people are among those that straddle Libya and Chad. Some of them are involved in smuggling and illegal migration, according to experts.

Bongo, who had ruled since 1967.

In 2016, Ali Bongo was re-elected by just a few thousand votes in a controversial presidential election.

The country went to the polls this month for the first time since that vote, with the second round of legislative elections Saturday seeing Bongo's party coasting towards victory. -AFP

"Most Chadian and Sudanese opposition armed groups have been seeking to increase their presence in Libya in the pursuit of profit," said a recent report by a UN group of experts on Libya. -AFP



Various groups, from jihadists to rebel groups originally from neighbouring Chad and Sudan have exploited Libya's enduring security vacuum (AFP Photo/KARIM SAHIB)

# EDITORIAL

## A people-centered development plan matters

**PRESIDENT GEORGE MANNEH** Weah launched his government's five-year development plan dubbed, Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development or PAPP over the weekend in Ganta, Nimba County, targeting to reduce poverty by 23 percent in five of six regions in Liberia.

**THE AMBITIOUS DOCUMENT** contains four pillars namely; Power to the People, Economy and Jobs, Sustaining the Peace, and Governance and Transparency. It was crafted by the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning under the auspices of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund or UNICEF.

**WE CAN BUT** only hope that the plan was truly designed with the Liberian people in mind, because they are supposed to be the ultimate beneficiaries in line with decision made at the ballot box during the December 26, 2017 Runoff Presidential Election. In short, the Liberian people overwhelmingly signed a social contract by electing then Candidate George Manneh Weah and his Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) party to govern the country and better their lives.

**TOO OFTEN IN** our country's history, we have observed with serious disappointment that politicians come with grandeur agenda and intentions that never see daylight. Instead, they remain mere slogans and blueprint on papers while state resources that should be directed at actual implementation or execution to achieving the dreams are siphoned and misappropriated.

**INSTEAD OF LEADERS** truly endeavoring to lift their people out of the shackles of illiteracy, ignorance, poverty, disease and misery, they get carried away by extravagant receptions and gifts proffered by executives of investment companies trying to win their hearts and forget about the masses.

**HERE ARE A** few examples: The late President William V.S. Tubman had the Open Door Policy that left this country bare for foreign investors during his entire 27 years rule with no tangible returns in terms of infrastructural development. His immediate successor President William R. Tolbert launched the similarly ambitious From Mat to Mattress Policy but he and his immediate relatives held the string tightly, directly involving themselves in all of the private investments, and at the same time running the government. Slain President Samuel Kanyon Doe ousted them in a bloody military coup in 1980, charged them with rampant corruption and executed 13 Tolbert officials by firing squad at the Barclay Training Center in Monrovia.

After taking power, Doe himself got entangled by nepotism, tribalism and endemic corruption, placing personal loyalty above national duty, a misrule that led to his government crumble in a rebel invasion on December 24, 1989 and his eventual capture and mutilation to death.

**REBEL LEADER CHARLES** Taylor preached freedom and patriotism from the bush on his way to Monrovia and launched Vision 2021 after winning election in 1997, but got blurred by power, ill-gotten wealth, women and personal aggrandizement, which led to his eventual downfall in 2003. Immediate former President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf came to power on a pendulum of massive international support and launched Poverty Reduction Strategy that was subsequently dubbed, Agenda for Transformation accompanied by Vision 2030. But after serving two consecutive six-year terms, she left office with no running water and electricity still remaining a luxury for most ordinary Liberians.

**THEREFORE, WE CAUTIOUSLY** welcome the Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development, launched on the theme, "Unveiling of an Integrated Five Years Medium-Term National Development Plan towards Accelerated, Inclusive and Sustainable Development." Notwithstanding, we believe the PAPP will only become meaningful if it impacted people's lives rather than just a mere slogan.

**FOR INSTANCE, PILLAR** One - Power to the People would just become a catch phrase absolutely mean nothing if the nation cannot feed itself, if thousands of our people don't have access to quality health care and shelter, while officials of government buy for themselves houses here and there, at the cost of hundreds of thousands of United States Dollars.

**IN SHORT, THE PAPP** should be truly people-centered by transforming lives. It shouldn't be a lip-service heralded in public speeches for political gains, for the issues it intends to address have existed for decades, and would only be appreciated for the difference it would make in Liberians' lives.

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# COMMENTARY

By Kaushik Basu

## Why is Democracy Faltering?

*While technological progress has brought important gains, it has also left many segments of the population feeling vulnerable, anxious, and angry, fueling a crisis of democratic legitimacy. Though it is not immediately clear how we can confront this crisis, it is clear that business as usual won't cut it.*

**N**EW YORK - Jair Bolsonaro, the frontrunner for the Brazilian presidency, is a far-right, gun-loving, media-baiting hyper-nationalist. The fact that he would be right at home among many of today's global leaders - including the leaders of some of the world's major democracies - should worry us all. This compels us to address the question: Why is democracy faltering?

We are at a historical turning point. Rapid technological progress, particularly the rise of digital technology and artificial intelligence, is transforming how our economies and societies function. While such technologies have brought important gains, they have also raised serious challenges - and left many segments of the population feeling vulnerable, anxious, and angry.

One consequence of recent technological progress has been a decline in the relative share of wages in GDP. As a relatively small number of people have claimed a growing piece of the pie, in the form of rents and profits, surging inequality of wealth and income has fueled widespread frustration with existing economic and political arrangements.

Gone are the days when one could count on a steady factory job to pay the bills indefinitely. With machines taking over high-wage manufacturing jobs, companies are increasingly seeking higher-skill workers in areas ranging from science to the arts. This shift in skill demand is fueling frustration. Imagine being told, after a lifetime of body-building, that the rules have been changed and the gold medal will be awarded not for wrestling, but for chess. This will be infuriating and unfair. The trouble is that no one does this deliberately; such changes are the outcome of natural drift in technology. Nature is often unfair. The onus for correcting the unfairness lies on us.

These developments have contributed to growing disparities in education and opportunity. A wealthier background has long improved one's chances of receiving a superior education and, thus, higher-paying jobs. As the value of mechanical skills in the labor market declines and income inequality rises, this difference is likely to become increasingly pronounced. Unless we transform education systems to ensure more equitable access to quality schooling, inequality will become ever-more entrenched.

The growing sense of unfairness accompanying these developments has undermined "democratic legitimacy," as Paul Tucker discusses in his book *Unelected Power*. In our deeply interconnected globalized economy, one country's policies - such as trade barriers, interest rates, or monetary expansion - can have far-reaching spillover effects. Mexicans, for example, do not just have to worry about whom they elect president; they also need to concern themselves with who wins power in the United States - an outcome over which they have no say. In this sense, globalization naturally leads to the erosion of democracy.

Against this background, the ongoing transformation of politics should not be surprising. The frustration of large segments of the population has created fertile ground for tribalism, which politicians like Trump and Bolsonaro have eagerly exploited.

Mainstream economics is founded on the assumption that human beings are motivated by exogenously given preferences - what economists call "utility functions." Though the relative weights may differ, all individuals want more and better food, clothes, shelter, vacations, and other experiences.

What this interpretation fails to account for are "created targets" that arise as we move through life. You are not born with an essential drive to kick the ball through a goal post. But once you take to soccer, you become obsessed with it. You do not do it to get more food or clothes or houses. It becomes a source of joy in itself. It is a created target.

Even becoming a sports fan is similar. Nobody is essentially a devotee of Real Madrid or the New England Patriots. But, through family, geography, or experience, one might become deeply connected to a particular sports team, to the point that it becomes a kind of tribal identity. A fan would support players not because of how they play, but because of the team they represent.

It is this dynamic that is fueling tribalism in politics today. Many who support Trump or Bolsonaro do so not because of what Trump or Bolsonaro will deliver, but rather because of their tribal identity. They have created targets related to being part of "Team Trump" or "Team Bolsonaro." This damages democracy by giving political leaders a license they did not have earlier. They can do what they want without being constrained by the will of the people.

It is not immediately clear how we can rectify these problems, protect the vulnerable, and restore democratic legitimacy. What is clear is that business as usual will not cut it.

The Industrial Revolution - another major turning point for humankind - brought massive changes in regulations and laws, from the various Factories Acts in the United Kingdom to the implementation of income tax in 1842. It also brought the birth of modern economics, with major breakthroughs by the likes of Adam Smith, Augustin Cournot, and John Stuart Mill.

But we are at a historical juncture where the subject of political economy deserves a rethink. The dinosaur did not have the capacity for self-analysis and headed toward extinction 65 million years ago. We, too, run the risk of civilizational collapse. But, luckily we are the first species with the capacity for self-analysis. Therein lies the hope that, despite all the turmoil and conflict we see around us, we will ultimately avert the "dinosaur risk" and pull ourselves back from the brink.

## O-PED

By Yossi Sheffi

## The Green Lobby's Misdirected Anger

**B**OSTON - In August, when US President Donald Trump proposed to freeze fuel-efficiency standards for cars and trucks, environmentalists and their supporters were outraged. Now, the temperature of the debate has risen again, following a special report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) that highlights the urgent need to take drastic action to curb carbon dioxide emissions.

While the environmentalists' efforts to combat climate change is laudable, their reactions to these developments are misdirected. The strategies for reducing emissions that they advocate barely move the needle and are, in many cases, counterproductive; giving companies and governments a "fig leaf." We need a real-world strategy for tackling climate change that marshals the world's technological resources without imposing crippling restrictions on economic growth.

Much of the backlash that followed the Trump administration's proposed relaxation of vehicle emissions standards has centered on two aspects of the 500-page report on which it is based. First, the administration accepted that the change will increase greenhouse-gas (GHG) emissions, but claimed that the increase would be inconsequential. Second, the administration estimates that global temperatures will increase by 3.5° Celsius (6.3° Fahrenheit) by 2100 if no action is taken. These assumptions provoked fierce criticism; the Boston Globe published the headline: "The Trump Administration Content to Sit Back and Watch Planet Warm."

Ten days later, the IPCC report reignited the debate. It argued that limiting global warming to 1.5° Celsius above pre-industrial levels - the goal set by the 2015 Paris Accord - will require draconian measures such as halting the use of internal combustion engines and deploying renewables to generate 75% of the world's electricity needs.

These measures will eliminate CO2 emissions, according to the IPCC, but may not be enough. A 1.5° Celsius increase in global temperatures is now accepted as inevitable, and warming is likely to reach 2° Celsius before the end of the century.

There are a number of reasons for these pessimistic projections. While many consumers in developed countries proclaim support for sustainability, they are generally not willing to pay for it or inconvenience themselves. Citizens of developing countries want a higher standard of living, regardless of the impact on global temperatures. Companies are responding to these mixed signals with weak, token actions to curb emissions that do not affect their bottom lines. Governments and politicians shun any policies that threaten jobs or job creation.

The result is that consumers are encouraged to partake in "feel good" activities. For example, separating trash and using cloth bags while shopping are largely meaningless behavioral changes. For example, household trash accounts for a mere 3% of the solid waste produced in the United States.

Companies follow the lead set by consumers. An example is the (ineffective) ban on plastic straws introduced by McDonald's, which continues to serve beef, which is a major contributor to global warming, owing to the methane produced by cattle. (Methane is 28 times more potent as a GHG than CO2.)

Finally, governments are part of the problem, not the solution. The US government withdrew from the Paris climate agreement, and the Australian government has weakened its commitment to it. The German government was complicit in the emissions scandal that engulfed the country's auto industry, and Germany's GHG emissions have not come down during the last decade. In fact, it is likely that Germany will not meet its 2020 or 2030 targets, despite pushing other countries to adopt them.

A clear-eyed assessment of the current state of affairs will reveal that the immediate battle is already lost, which brings us to the Trump administration's controversial emissions policy. The report that sets out the policy shows that the emperor is indeed naked. Small, incremental sustainability initiatives are inadequate and hence pointless, needlessly frustrate economic growth and job creation, and enable developed countries to insist on economic concessions from developing countries that they have no right to demand. When viewed through this lens, the administration's fuel efficiency report does not look as crazy as it has been made out to be.

There are only two ways, I believe, for the world to avoid what most scientists refer to as disastrous global warming.

First, we could stop economic growth, because the idea of "green growth" is a fallacy promulgated by environmentalists who seem to be engaged in wishful thinking. Such an extreme action would require the world to reinvent the way economic activity is measured. And it would involve ethically dubious policies such as forced population control.

Second, the rich world could launch a "Manhattan Project" to develop and scale technologies that can rid the planet of GHG accumulation. These may include carbon sequestration and geo-engineering, as well as innovations such as plant-based meat, alternatives to concrete for structures, and nuclear-fusion power generation.

The second approach offers a real-world solution to the global warming crisis that avoids the moral pitfalls of the first (which include leaving billions of people trapped in poverty). We can combat global warming only if we deploy our greatest natural resource: human ingenuity.

## OPINION

By Ana Palacio

## Did the Global Order Die with Khashoggi?

**W**ASHINGTON, DC - Earlier this month, Jamal Khashoggi - a Washington Post columnist and prominent critic of the Saudi government - walked into Saudi Arabia's consulate in Istanbul to pick up documents that would enable him to marry his Turkish fiancée. Instead of receiving help from his country's government, he was tortured, murdered, and dismembered by a team of its agents.

It is a shocking crime that raises some serious questions, not least regarding the appropriate balance between defending human rights and maintaining long-standing (and lucrative) alliances. More fundamentally, the sheer brazenness with which the Saudi government had Khashoggi killed - not to mention Western leaders' weak response - has underscored for people around the world just how coldly calculated geopolitical machinations really are.

Transparency is usually a virtue to be encouraged. Here, however, the revelation comes at a cost. The belief that principles, values, and rules hold at least some weight in international relations has a stabilizing effect. As that belief is shaken - say, by the poisoning earlier this year of the former Russian double agent Sergei Skripal and his daughter on British soil - the global order is damaged, perhaps beyond repair.

The delegitimizing effect of such episodes is exacerbated by a broader abandonment of formalities - such as workplace dress codes and standards for communication - that has been fueled by the rise of social media. As our public and private lives are blurred, public figures are under pressure to appear as "real" and "normal" as our neighbors and colleagues. Even Pope Francis has released a rock album.

Of course, not all of these shifts are necessarily bad. The breakdown of formal structures can create space for independent thinking and innovation. The danger comes when no new framework emerges to help guide our behavior - and, more important, the behavior of our leaders - to ensure that it adheres to some shared values or reasonable expectations.

US President Donald Trump embodies this risk. Since coming onto the political scene, Trump has shattered expectations about how a US presidential candidate - and, subsequently, a US president - should behave. While there is nothing fundamentally wrong with a political leader communicating frankly and directly with his or her constituents, the tone and style of Trump's delivery - largely via Twitter - is highly damaging. His below-the-belt insults, racist dog whistles, and unfounded attacks on the media and other democratic institutions are deepening political and social divisions, while diminishing respect for the presidency and the US more generally.

Trump's unprecedentedly transactional - and highly erratic - approach to foreign policy is similarly destabilizing. To be sure, Trump's deal-making was initially framed to some extent by broader values, especially increasing the "fairness" of US relationships, from security cooperation with NATO allies to trade ties with China. Despite Trump's "America first" rhetoric, such actions seemed to be focused more on rebalancing the system than destroying it.

Trump's response to the Khashoggi episode, however, is fully decoupled from any overarching values. To be clear, US presidents, together with European leaders, have been coddling Saudi Arabia for decades, and leaders worldwide often base their foreign-policy decisions on realpolitik, rather than moral considerations.

But this is the first time a US president has unabashedly acknowledged the purely transactional nature of their policy decisions. The Saudis, Trump declares bluntly, are "spending \$110 billion on military equipment and on things that create jobs" in the US. "I don't like the concept of stopping an investment of \$110 billion into the United States."

Notwithstanding the dubiousness of the figures involved, Trump's comments are a bald statement of monetized interest. The comfort, even pride, with which he makes such statements indicates that we really have entered a new era, in which we cannot expect our leaders to clear even the low bar of trying to fit their decisions into a rules- or values-based narrative.

This is dangerous, because such narratives are vital to maintain the credibility of the global order and the support of domestic constituencies for it. Just like effective leadership and respect for the rule of law, a certain amount of faith in the system - even if it is qualified by frustration with inequality or impunity - is essential to its survival.

A world in which all that matters is the deal, in which there is no ethos guiding our actions and underpinning our governance systems, is one where citizens do not know what to expect from their leaders and countries do not know what to expect from their allies. Such an unpredictable and unstable world is not one that we should blindly accept.

It is not too late to respond to Khashoggi's brutal murder in a way that reinforces, rather than undermines, the rules on which we all depend. German Chancellor Angela Merkel's suspension of arms sales to Saudi Arabia is a good start, even if it was driven largely by her desire to shore up support for her Christian Democratic Union ahead of regional elections in Hesse; so, too, is the current pushback from Washington against a business-as-usual approach to Saudi Arabia.

But more must be done, with principled leaders declaring clearly that what happened in Istanbul is not acceptable. Otherwise, we will effectively be giving up the discourse of values and rules - a decision that could well leave us with no coherent and stabilizing discourse at all.

# LIBERIANS DEBATE

With Sally H. Gaye Cell#: 0886726282 Email:sh0770291004@gmail.com



**P**resident George Manneh Weah declares tuition free for undergraduates at the University of Liberia and all public universities and colleges in the country. The Visitor to the University of Liberia made pronouncement Wednesday, 24 October in the UL Auditorium following a tour of the Capitol Hill Campus.



**Vernon Washington**

“Excited, no I'm not. This is good but not the urgent priority! We need free and quality primary education. Offering a tuition free university education to folks who could somehow or someway afford the cost is good but absolutely not urgent. Dear Mr. President, please also, at your most favorable gesture, ensure that there's free, and not

free of knowledge, educational institutions for our young students most especially, primary school going kids that you might feel comfortable sending some your grandchildren to without hesitation. Thank you! And y'all at UL, congratulations. I might enroll there.”



**Hansford Ama-jowel**

“Free education, spell your name. This was the song we once sang during our elementary days in school..... I am in tears of joy at moment. After several decades of existence, President Weah has declared the University of Liberia tuition-free with only ten months in office. No more standing in long queues for hours to get ULSU financial aid

just to be in school. Students protested and disrupted normal learning activities for many years, resisting the administration over tuition rise. Many student leaders got expelled and suspended by authorities of the University for their Radical Postures in defense of struggling students at the state-run university. Today, the students can now stay home or wherever, run their registration by planning their courses online without having to interact with anyone physically and get registration complete free of charge. Hope is now restored at the University of Liberia.”

**Michael Tipayson**

“As a President of your Country, the least I owe you is to EDUCATE YOU- And, I want you to use that Education to DEVELOP LIBERIA. President George Weah remarks today at the University of Liberia when he declared Free Tuition for all Public Universities in Liberia. To further enhance this statement, I will begin an appeal to President Weah as a citizen of the Republic of Liberia. I want to read HYDROLOGY so as to help close the gaps in that sector. Your declaration is powerful and will help most of the less fortunate students across the country.”



**Joshes Jones**

“The economy must be strong to fully fund the UL. There are many other private donors of students at the UL, you are also limiting the UL ability to raise revenue by this move. Free university is supported by the citizens through committed taxpaying, not only central government. How about those primary and secondary schools? Are they going to keep paying tuition and fees, where struggling parents can't afford to send their kids to school?”



**Bgraciousyandibo**

“CONGRATULATIONS to President George M. Weah for the free tuition for all students at the University of Liberia. This pronouncement means a lot to Liberians as well as strengthening the education sector in Mama Liberia. At least those who have the university requirements, but cannot afford tuitions can now enroll. And this is ready giving hope to education



in Liberia.”

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Welcome To The New World

## MORE HEADLINE NEWS

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## Africa fails on youth empowerment

### -Mo Ibrahim Foundation alarms

By Ben P. Wese

As Liberia joins countries around the world to observe the 49th national youth day, the Mo Ibrahim Foundation says governance progress in Africa lags behind needs and expectations of growing population, despite strong GDP growth over the last ten years. It notes that Africa has failed to generate economic opportunities for its booming youth population.

"Since 2008 the African

African Governance (IIAG), launched on Monday, October 29, by the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, highlights that public governance progress in Africa is lagging behind the needs and expectations of a growing population, composed mainly of young people.

It points out that over the last decade, overall governance has on average maintained a moderate upward trajectory, with three out of four of Africa's citizens (71.6%) living in a country

demographic growth and youth expectations. Africa's population has increased by 26.0% over the last ten years and 60% of the continent's 1.25 billion people are now under the age of 25," the IIAG narrates.

The report continues that African countries show increasing divergence in Overall Governance performance and continental progress is mainly driven by 15 countries that have managed to accelerate their pace of improvement over the last five years, noting that progress is most striking in Côte d'Ivoire, Morocco and Kenya, amongst others.

According to the IIAG, divergence is also reflected in Sustainable Economic Opportunity trends, while 27 of Africa's countries have shown some improvement, accounting for 43.2 percent of Africa's citizens, but Sustainable Economic Opportunity performance has declined over the last ten years.

"There is no strong relationship between the size of a country's economy and its performance in Sustainable Economic Opportunity. In 2017, four of the ten countries with the highest GDP on the continent scored below the African average score for Sustainable Economic Opportunity and sit in the lower half of the rankings, namely: Algeria, Angola, Nigeria, and Sudan. Meanwhile two of the smallest economies on the continent, Seychelles and Cape Verde, reach the 5th and 6th highest scores in providing Sustainable Economic Opportunity for their citizens," IIAG discloses. Report

down and analyze to make this scheme work for the benefit of the citizens.

According to him, it is time that Churches in Liberia wake up from their division, noting that no one group can solve the challenges that Liberia is facing.

It can be recalled that President George Manneh Weah on Wednesday, October 24, declared tuition free at the undergraduate level for all public universities across the country.

The President's pronouncement comes amid tension between the University of Liberia's students and the administration over

## GoL, UAE sign MOU for visa waiver

The Government of Liberia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to allow Diplomatic Passports holders of both countries to enjoy Visa free privilege between the two states.

The ceremony took place in the conference room of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

According to a Foreign Ministry Release, Acting Foreign Minister Elias Shoniyin signed on behalf of the Liberian Government while the Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates (UAE Hon, Shabab Alhosoni signed for his government.

According to the MOU, Diplomats of both countries will have a Visa Free entry into either of the two countries, while Liberian Service

very soon.

Mr. Shabab Alhosoni also disclosed plan by his government to finalize all documentations aimed at implementing the commitments made to Liberia.

In response, Mr. Shoniyin thanked the Government and People of the UAE for its efforts leading to the finalization of the Visa waiver agreement for diplomats of the two states.

He termed the MOU as a critical instrument between Liberia and the United Arab Emirates, which he said has developed a framework for the two countries to engage and deepen cooperation in other fields.

Acting Minister Shoniyin also recounted that the signing of the MOU between Liberia and the UAE has removed critical and important barriers including the movement of

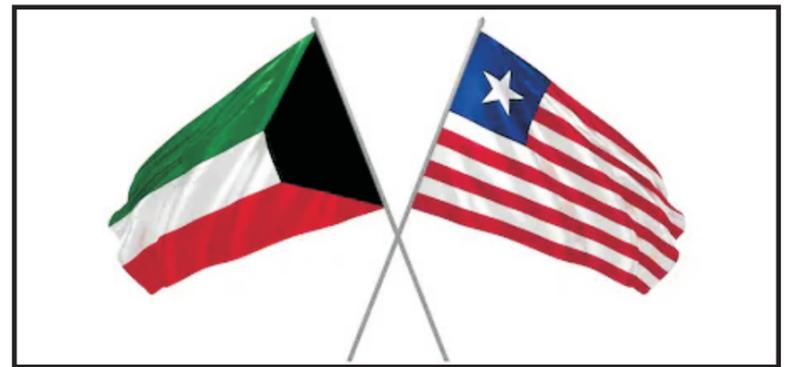


average score for Sustainable Economic Opportunity has increased by 0.1 point, or 0.2 percent, despite a continental increase in GDP of nearly 40 percent over the same period. There has been virtually no progress in creating Sustainable Economic Opportunity, meaning it remains the IIAG's worst performing and slowest improving category," the report notes.

The 2018 Ibrahim Index of

where governance has improved but African governments have struggled to translate economic growth into improved Sustainable Economic Opportunity for their citizens.

"Defined as the extent to which governments enable their citizens to pursue economic goals and prosper, the almost stagnant Sustainable Economic Opportunity trend strikes a concerning contrast with



Passports holders traveling to the UAE on official duties maybe accorded Visa Free privilege as well.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, the Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates, Hon. Shabab Alhosoni described the ceremony as unique platform where the two sides can meet face to face to dialogue and strengthen their relationship.

He added that the signing of the MOU by the two countries serves as a foundation for Liberia and United Arab Emirates relationship, adding "we look forward to do more in our future engagements."

Commenting further on Liberia-UAE relations, Assistant Minister Shabab Alhosoni reaffirmed his country's fullest commitment to deepen cooperation in several areas of engagement

diplomatic officials in both countries to allow them engage and deepen ties in new and rewarding areas of corporation.

The Acting Foreign Minister also used the occasion to reaffirm Liberia's determination to expand bilateral engagements with the United Arab Emirates in critical areas such as manpower development and partnership.

The Acting Minister specifically mentioned plan by the two countries to finalize the Health Services and Aviation agreements; agreement on agriculture, education and infrastructure development as well as other critical areas that are consistent with the Liberia's development agenda. -Press release

## LCC lauds President Weah's tuition-free scheme

By Lewis S. Teh

The Liberia Council of Churches (LCC) has lauded President George Manneh Weah for declaring free education to undergraduate students to all public universities within the country.

Launching the "Waking the Giant Initiative" recently in Sinkor, LCC president Rev. Dr. Kortu Brown thanked President Weah on behalf of the Council, expressing their gratitude for such a wonderful decision in these difficult time, declaring

a tuition free education at various public universities.

Rev. Brown says it is something that citizens were long desirous to have.

"We commend the government for such laudable efforts, but we hope that the mechanism is developed because the money we're talking about is not committed. It's new money to be added," Rev. Brown cautions.

He says the Council of Churches is hoping that all the relevant institutions will sit

the increment in credit hour fee from L\$400 to L\$600 per credit hour.

President Weah's declaration is a relief for many struggling students at the state-run university.

But some political pundits have termed the pronouncement as more of a political posturing and not meeting the current economic reality the nation faces.-- Edited by Winston W. Parley

**MORE HEADLINE NEWS**

**MORE HEADLINE NEWS**

**PAPD will lift millions from poverty**

**--Finance Minister**

By Lewis S. Teh

**F**inance Minister Samuel D. Tweah says the aim of the Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD) is to lift one million Liberians out of poverty over the next five years.

He made the assertion Saturday, 27 October in Ganta, Nimba County while presenting to President George Manneh Weah the PAPD for its official launch.

The PAPD comes with a strong promise to lift Liberians out of poverty within the next five years.

Minister Tweah explains that this does not mean that Liberians are going to be rich, but they will have stable and sustainable income from which they will support their various livelihoods.

“The plans aim to do this by enabling the private sector to grow and produce jobs in various sectors of [the] economy,” he says.

According to him, jobs in

agriculture, forestry, manufacturing and in-service sectors will give Liberians some sustainable income.



Finance Minister Samuel D. Tweah

Minister Tweah reveals that the PAPD plan encapsulates the fears, the anxiety,

criticism, the ideas and the lesson learned for all Liberians.

Minister Tweah indicates that the plans will take Liberians where the private sector falls short and provide

social protection for the vulnerable and the poor.

Minister Tweah reports that

the effective drafting of the PAPD began in March 2018, noting that effective delivery is the most important aspect of the launch.

In the next five years, Minister Tweah says government and its partners should place the country on the path to meeting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which has now replaced the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

If the goals and objectives under the PAPD are achieved, he says government would have achieved the SDGs since the PAPD is linked to both the SDGs and the Agenda 2063 Provision of African Transformation under the African Union (AU).

According to Minister Tweah, one of the reasons why Liberia did not meet the MDGs was due to the shocks from the deadly Ebola and collapse of commodity prices over the past several years.

For his part, United Nations Resident Coordinator in Liberia Mr. Yacoub El Hillo says it is the responsibility of the UN to contribute not only to the launch, but to the implementation of the document for the benefit of the Liberian people.

“Now that the PAPD is being

launched here, we at the UN are going to immediately amend, and produce a new framework for UN development assistance in Liberia to be totally aligned with the pro-poor agenda,” he says.

Mr. Hillo says it is befitting that the launch of this agenda is not taking place in Monrovia, because he believes that the pro-poor agenda is not about Monrovia, but about Liberia.

According to him, it is befitting that a key priority for President Weah and his government is roads, and that is what is going to unlock the potential of Liberia.

The UN envoy notes that roads do not only facilitate people’s movement easily, but they also make the movement of goods [smooth] and open the economy.

The PAPD launch brought together officials of government from line ministries and agencies including the private sector, members of the diplomatic corps, civil society institutions and students from various high schools across Ganta, among others.--*Edited by Winston W. Parley*

**Liberia lost 1,700 lives on road accidents**

**-Safe Life Liberia alarms**

By Lewis S. Teh

**T**he Executive Director of Safe Life Liberia Vasco T. Maseh alarms over increase of deaths in the country as a result of road accident.

The group discloses that Liberia has lost about 1,700 lives as the result of road accidents, and stresses that road safety is something that matters to the wellbeing of citizens and the general public.

Addressing a news conference on Monday, October 29, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Monrovia,

the Executive Director of Safe Life Liberia Vasco T. Maseh notes road-related deaths and injuries are sudden, violent, traumatic events, and their impacts are long-lasting and often permanent.

He explains everyday newly bereaved and injured people from every corner of the country are added to thousands of citizens that are already suffering as the result of road crash, noting that the sense of grief and distress of this huge group of people is greater because many of the victims are young.

“It’s unfortunate to inform the President and the Liberian people that Liberia has lost 1700 lives, and 7 percent of its GDP in 2017 alone due to the road crashes, and 2018 is predicted even more worse, according to World Health Organization [WHO’s] reports and experts approximations.”

According to him, Safe Life Liberia is an association of road accident victims in Liberia that is calling on President George M. Weah to lead national road safety campaign with urgent action as it was done by former President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf who stood up against the Ebola virus, rape, and natural disasters.

Accidents road traffic severe injuries have a serious national impact with too many citizens losing their lives though Safe Life Liberia commends the recent implementation of a national road safety action plan by President Weah, but “We are concerned by the continued deaths and injuries that continue to occur on roads.

He regrets that road accidents have become a killer of innocent people especially, young

Minister quotes the Police that four persons suffer



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deaths on various community roads, while 100 suffer severe injuries as the result of road crashes, so it is against this backdrop that it calls for President Weah’s intervention to help reduce the unnecessary death of citizens.

“we like to use this opportunity to remind President Weah that these troubling situations were inherited from the past administration, where the Presidential motorcade of former President Sirleaf killed two innocent kids at the ELWA

Junction on November 30, 2016”, he recalls.

He says just last Saturday, six persons reportedly died along the Monrovia-Gbarnga highway, and President Weah must act now.

The group further recommends to government to launch a monthly national road safety awareness campaign to be styled “Weah Road Safety Day” to conduct a national drivers training program for every driver in the country. -  
*Editing by Jonathan Browne*

# Français

## Weah dévoile son plan de développement et fait de grandes promesses

Le président George Manneh Weah a lancé le plan de développement national quinquennal de son gouvernement, baptisé « Programme en faveur des pauvres pour la prospérité et le développement » (PAPD), et promet de promouvoir la diversification économique et une paix durable.

Le président Weah a dévoilé sa stratégie de développement à Ganta, dans le comté de Nimba, le samedi 27 octobre, neuf mois après sa prise du pouvoir. Le PAPD, selon ses termes, a pour objectifs de donner le pouvoir à la population, de promouvoir la diversification économique, de protéger une paix durable et d'encourager la bonne gouvernance.

La cérémonie de lancement du PAPD, qui a été retransmise en direct sur les chaînes nationales, a réuni les membres du gouvernement Weah, des membres de l'Assemblée



législative, des partenaires au développement et des parties prenantes.

Au cours des cinq prochaines années, à en croire le président Weah, le gouvernement investira dans des infrastructures de haute qualité, notamment des routes, l'énergie abordable et les ports maritimes, et mettra l'accent sur les

technologies de l'information et de la communication (TIC).

Selon le président, le gouvernement prendra des mesures pour améliorer l'adduction d'eau potable et l'assainissement, il investira dans l'éducation et la santé, tout en mettant l'accent sur la sécurité nationale pour permettre aux Libériens de

circuler librement.

Le président Weah entend faire preuve d'un engagement personnel et d'une diligence sans faille pour atteindre ces objectifs.

Il a exhorté le peuple du Liberia à soutenir le PAPD afin de garantir son bon fonctionnement, tout en promettant que chaque ligne du « document » sera mise en œuvre, car le PAPD énonce clairement la vision de son gouvernement pour le pays et ses habitants.

Il a vanté les mérites de son gouvernement qui, en neuf mois, « a déjà commencé à tenir certaines de ses promesses », puis ajouté que le PAPD est la feuille de route claire de son plan de développement

national quinquennal en vue de la réalisation de ses objectifs.

Selon lui, le gouvernement a mené une vaste consultation auprès de toutes ses parties prenantes pour élaborer cette feuille de route, dont notamment des partenaires au développement, des bailleurs de fonds internationaux et le secteur privé.

Plus tôt, lors de la présentation du PAPD au président Weah, le ministre des Finances, Samuel Tweah, a déclaré que la stratégie nationale de mobilisation des ressources vise à lever un milliard de dollars supplémentaires de sources nationales.

Il le qualifie d'un plan ambitieux réalisable, citant l'engagement du gouvernement à générer des revenus en prenant des décisions difficiles.

L'une d'elles, selon le ministre Tweah, consiste à limiter les exonérations fiscales. Selon lui, un examen des exonérations des 12 dernières années a révélé des effets néfastes sur l'économie nationale de diverses manières.

Ainsi, dans le cadre du PAPD et du plan de ressources nationales, le ministre Tweah a annoncé l'engagement du gouvernement à minimiser les exonérations afin de générer des revenus qui devront permettre au Libéria de compter sur ses propres ressources.

## Namibie : la population noire écartée des contrats miniers

La Namibie a récemment entamé une nouvelle réforme de ses terres. Elles sont encore détenues à 70% par les Blancs namibiens, qui représentent moins de 10%

de la population totale. Le gouvernement de Hage Geingob accélère donc la redistribution aux populations noires, mais dans le même temps, limite leur accès aux contrats miniers.

La loi vient d'être changée : les compagnies minières n'auront plus besoin d'être détenues par des Noirs namibiens pour acquérir des contrats. Une décision polémique, qui va à l'encontre du discours officiel de Windhoek depuis plusieurs mois.

C'est un virage à 180 degrés qu'a opéré le pouvoir namibien. Après un grand sommet à Windhoek en début de mois, où la redistribution des terres à la population noire a été entérinée, le gouvernement a écarté cette même population noire des potentiels contrats miniers.

Depuis 2015, pour pouvoir décrocher une concession minière, les entreprises devaient remplir deux critères : être dirigées à 20% par des Namibiens noirs et détenues à au moins 5% par des citoyens namibiens.

Une politique de discrimination positive qui s'achève donc au nom de la croissance économique. Le

ministre des Mines, Tom Alweendo, est formel : « Notre objectif est de faire croître le secteur minier, qui peut contribuer de façon significative à notre développement socio-économique. »

Pour une Namibie entrée en récession il y a deux ans,

le secteur minier est vital, il représente 12% de son PIB. Mais l'incohérence du président Geingob agace dans le pays. La semaine dernière, il a annoncé louer 17 000 hectares de terres à un milliardaire russe, là aussi officiellement pour stimuler une économie en berne.



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# Français

## Éditorial

### Il faut un plan de développement qui donne la priorité au peuple

Le président George Manneh Weah a lancé ce week-end à Ganta, dans le comté de Nimba, son plan de développement quinquennal intitulé Pro-Poor Agenda for Development and Prosperity (PADP) - Programme en faveur des pauvres pour le développement et la prospérité. Le programme, selon ses termes, vise à réduire de 23% la pauvreté dans cinq des six régions du Libéria.

Le document ambitieux contient quatre piliers, à savoir : Le pouvoir au peuple, l'économie et l'emploi, le maintien de la paix et la gouvernance et la transparence. Il a été conçu par le Ministère des finances et de la planification du développement sous les auspices du Programme des Nations Unies pour le développement (PNUD) et du Fonds international des Nations Unies pour l'enfance (UNICEF).

Nous ne pouvons qu'espérer que le plan a été véritablement conçu en pensant au peuple libérien, car il est censé en être le bénéficiaire ultime conformément à la décision prise dans les urnes lors du second tour de l'élection présidentielle, le 26 décembre 2017. En bref, le peuple libérien, en grand nombre, a signé un contrat social en élisant George Manneh Weah et son parti, la Coalition pour le changement démocratique (CDC), pour gouverner le pays et améliorer leurs conditions de vie.

Trop souvent dans l'histoire de notre pays, nous avons observé avec une profonde déception que les politiciens présentent un programme de gouvernement grandiose et affichent des intentions positives, mais cela ne voit jamais le jour. Cela a toujours été un simple slogan et des sketches sur papiers, tandis que les derniers publics qui devraient être consacrés à la mise en œuvre réelle ou à la réalisation des rêves sont détournés et dilapidés.

Au lieu que les leaders cherchent véritablement à sortir leur peuple des chaînes de l'analphabétisme, de l'ignorance, de la pauvreté, de la maladie et de la misère, ils se laissent emporter par les cérémonies extravagantes et les cadeaux offerts par les chefs d'entreprises qui tentent de gagner leur cœur et d'oublier les masses.

En voici quelques exemples. Le regretté Président William V.S. Tubman avait la politique de la porte ouverte qui avait ouvert le pays aux investisseurs étrangers pendant ses 27 ans de règne, mais il n'y a rien de tangible en termes de développement des infrastructures. Son successeur immédiat, le président William R. Tolbert, a lancé la politique ambitieuse intitulée « de la natte au matelas », mais lui et ses proches parents ont durement tenu les ficelles, s'impliquant directement dans tous les investissements privés tout en dirigeant simultanément le gouvernement. Le président assassiné, Samuel Kanyon Doe, l'a évincé lors d'un coup d'État sanglant en 1980, a accusés de corruption et exécuté 13 de ses responsables au centre de formation de Barclay à Monrovia. Après avoir pris le pouvoir, Doe a lui-même été empêtré dans le népotisme, le tribalisme et la corruption endémique, plaçant la loyauté personnelle au-dessus du devoir national, ce qui a conduit son gouvernement à s'effondrer pendant l'invasion rebelle lancée le 24 décembre 1989, avant d'être capturé et mutilé à mort.

Le chef rebelle Charles Taylor a prêché la liberté et le patriotisme dans la brousse alors qu'il se rendait l'arme dans la main à Monrovia. Il a lancé la Vision 2021 après avoir remporté les élections en 1997. Mais cette vision s'est vite effacée sous l'influence du pouvoir, de la richesse mal acquise, des femmes et de l'orgueil. Ce qui a entraîné sa chute finale en 2003. L'ancienne Présidente Ellen Johnson Sirleaf est arrivée au pouvoir avec un soutien international massif. Elle a lancé la stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté, qui a ensuite été surnommée Agenda pour la transformation, accompagnée de la Vision 2030. Mais après deux mandats consécutifs de six ans, elle a quitté son poste sans qu'il ait de l'eau potable et l'électricité reste un luxe pour la plupart des Libériens.

Par conséquent, nous nous félicitons avec modération du programme en faveur des pauvres pour la prospérité et le développement qui a été lancé sur le thème « dévoilement d'un plan de développement national intégré à moyen terme sur cinq ans, axé sur un développement accéléré, inclusif et durable ». Pour nous, le PADP n'aura un sens que s'il améliore véritablement les conditions de vie du peuple. Si non, il demeurera un simple slogan.

Par exemple, le premier pilier, notamment « le pouvoir au peuple » restera un slogan qui ne veut absolument rien dire si le pays n'arrive pas à se nourrir lui-même, si des milliers de nos citoyens n'ont pas accès au soin et à un abri de qualité, pendant que les responsables du gouvernement s'achètent des maisons luxueuses ici et là, au prix de centaines de milliers de dollars américains.

En bref, il faut que le PADP cherche à améliorer les conditions de vie des personnes. Il ne faut pas qu'il soit un discours politique prononcé ici et là pour des gains politiques, car les problèmes qu'il entend résoudre ont existé depuis des décennies.

## COMMENTAIRE

Par Kaushik Basu

### Pourquoi la démocratie vacille-t-elle ?

NEW-YORK - Jair Bolsonaro, le grand favori du deuxième tour de l'élection présidentielle au Brésil, est un hyper-nationaliste d'extrême-droite, favorable aux armes à feu, qui fait de la presse un bouc émissaire. Le fait qu'il soit sur la même longueur d'onde que beaucoup de dirigeants actuels - dont certains à la tête des plus grandes démocraties de la planète - est inquiétant. Cela nous amène à la question suivante : pourquoi la démocratie vacille-t-elle sur ses bases ?

Nous vivons un tournant historique. Le progrès technologique rapide (notamment le développement des techniques numériques et de l'intelligence artificielle) transforme la manière dont l'économie et la société fonctionnent. Les nouvelles technologies sont porteuses de nombreux avantages, mais elles posent aussi de graves défis - et abandonnent toute une partie de la population à un sentiment de vulnérabilité, dans l'anxiété, voire dans la colère.

La baisse de la part des salaires dans le PIB est l'une des conséquences des avancées technologiques récentes. Un nombre relativement limité de personnes accaparant une part de plus en plus grande des revenus sous la forme de salaires ou de profits, l'augmentation des inégalités de revenus et de patrimoines suscite un grand sentiment de frustration à l'égard du système économique et politique.

Loin est l'époque où l'on pouvait compter sur un emploi stable pratiquement à vie. Les machines remplaçant les postes bien payés dans les usines, les entreprises recherchent de plus en plus des travailleurs hautement qualifiés dans d'autres domaines qui s'étendent de la science aux arts. Ce basculement de la demande sur le marché du travail génère des frustrations. Imaginons qu'après toute une vie passée à faire de la musculation, on nous dise que les règles ont changé et que désormais la médaille d'or ne reviendra pas au plus musclé mais au meilleur joueur d'échec. Ce serait injuste et aurait de quoi rendre furieux. Mais personne ne fait cela délibérément, ce basculement tient à l'évolution naturelle de la technique. La nature est souvent injuste, et la responsabilité d'y remédier nous incombe.

Cette évolution contribue à la montée des disparités dans l'éducation et dans les opportunités d'emploi. Depuis longtemps, le fait d'appartenir à un milieu aisé augmente la probabilité d'accéder à l'université, et de ce fait de bénéficier d'un meilleur salaire. La valeur des compétences manuelles étant à la baisse sur le marché du travail et les inégalités étant à la hausse, ces disparités vont probablement s'accroître. Si nous ne transformons pas le système éducatif pour qu'il assure un accès plus équitable à une éducation de qualité, elles seront encore plus marquées.

Le sentiment croissant d'injustice qui accompagne cette évolution sape la "légitimité démocratique" dont parle Paul Tucker dans son livre *Unelected Power*. Au sein d'une économie mondiale dont les membres sont fortement interconnectés entre eux, les mesures prises par un seul pays (par exemple le choix du montant des taxes douanières, du montant des taux d'intérêt ou d'une politique d'expansion monétaire) peuvent avoir des répercussions bien au-delà de ses frontières. Ainsi les Mexicains se préoccupent non seulement de l'élection de leur propre président, mais également de celle du président des USA, alors qu'ils n'y participent pas. En ce sens, la mondialisation conduit tout naturellement à

l'érosion de la démocratie.

Dans ce contexte, il n'est guère surprenant que la politique soit elle aussi en plein remaniement. Le sentiment de frustration d'une grande partie de la population crée un terrain propice au tribalisme - ce que des politiciens comme Trump et Bolsonaro exploitent à fond.

La science économique dominante repose sur l'idée que les êtres humains sont motivés avant tout par des objectifs communs portant sur des éléments tels que la nourriture, le logement, les vacances, etc. Bien que la valeur accordée à chacun de ces objectifs varie d'une personne à l'autre, tout le monde veut une nourriture abondante et de bonne qualité, et il en va de même pour les autres objectifs partagés.

Mais cette idée fait l'impasse sur les objectifs personnels que l'on se fixe au cours de la vie et qui sont propres à un individu. Nous ne sommes pas nés avec l'idée de projeter un ballon dans les buts adverses. Mais une fois que l'on commence à jouer au foot, cela peut devenir une obsession. Alors on ne joue pas au foot pour s'enrichir, mais parce qu'il est pour nous source de joie. Le foot est pour nous un objectif personnel.

Devenir un supporter est quelque chose du même ordre. Personne n'est par essence un partisan farouche du Real de Madrid ou des New England Patriots. Mais en raison de sa famille ou de son histoire personnelle, on peut établir une relation très spécifique avec une équipe donnée, au point que cela devient une sorte d'identité tribale. Un supporter ne soutient pas des joueurs pour leur jeu, mais pour l'équipe qu'ils représentent.

C'est la même dynamique qui alimente aujourd'hui le tribalisme politique. Beaucoup des partisans de Trump ou de Bolsonaro ne le sont pas en raison de ce qu'ils vont faire, mais plutôt en raison de leur identité tribale. En quelque sorte, leur objectif est de soutenir "l'équipe Trump" ou "l'équipe Bolsonaro". Cela porte atteinte à la démocratie, car cela permet à des dirigeants politiques de faire ce qu'ils veulent sans qu'il soit possible de s'y opposer.

Comment réagir face à cette situation, comment protéger les plus vulnérables et restaurer la légitimité démocratique ? La réponse n'a rien d'évident, mais il est certain qu'il faut agir.

La Révolution industrielle - un autre tournant majeur pour l'humanité - a suscité d'énormes changements de nature réglementaire et juridique, des différentes lois sur les usines au Royaume-Uni à la création de l'impôt sur le revenu en 1842. Elle a donné naissance à l'économie moderne, avec les idées novatrices de personnes comme Adam Smith, Augustin Cournot ou John Stuart Mill.

Nous sommes à une croisée des chemins d'importance historique qui mérite de repenser l'économie politique. Il y a 65 millions d'années, les dinosaures n'avaient pas notre capacité d'autoanalyse lorsqu'ils se sont dirigés vers leur propre extinction. A notre tour, nous risquons de voir notre civilisation s'effondrer. Mais heureusement, nous sommes la première espèce capable de s'autoanalyser. C'est en cela que réside l'espoir que malgré tous les désordres et les conflits, nous parviendrons à éviter de suivre le chemin des dinosaures et à faire marche arrière avant qu'il ne soit trop tard.

# FEATURE ARTICLE

## Madina Town, Sime Darby Land Disputes Continues

By Throble Kaffa Suah, Freelance Journalist

**M**adina Town, a town with sizable population and Sime Darby Plantation (Liberia) Incorporated, land dispute continue unabated in Garwula District, Grand Cape Mount County.

As such, the need to handle the confusion with care by both local and national authorities, who are initiating peace talks to ease tension cannot be overemphasized because there is potential threat for violence.

Because many of the agreement(s) reached and signed between government and investor(s) seems not to meet the consent of affected communities/residents and as such, remedies are needed now than ever before.

For sometimes now, protests have marred Golden Veroleum Oil Palm Company located in Sinoe and Grand Kru Counties; Arcelor Mittal Steel in Nimba County; Equatorial Guinea Oil Palm Corporation in Grand Bassa County; China Union in lower Bong County; Bea Mountain Mining Company in Grand Cape Mount County; as well as Sime Darby Plantation (Liberia) Incorporated both in Grand Cape Mount and Bomi Counties respectively between landowner (residents/citizenry) and user (companies/investors).

To the extent government had to intervene with state security but that seems not enough. On grounds

have initiated peace conferences to settle the disputes, as one of which was held Saturday, 20 October 2018, in Kon-Town, Madina Township in Garwula District.

Attendees representing Sime Darby Plantation were Zulu Seh, Industrial Relations Manager; Dao Metzger, Human Resource Manager and Samwar Fallah, Public Relations Manager. While Alfred Quayjandii, Lead Negotiator/Spokesman; Alieu Gbany Kiandole, Land Committee Chairman; Chief Folley Sherman, Town Chief of Madina Town; Boima Freeman, Chairman for Concern Citizens Madina for Land Dispute, represented Madina Town, as well as Chief James S. Mator, Sr. represented Nimba Point among others.

Madina Township's Commissioner, Stephen Perry, with residence in Kon-Town was the Convener. Sime Darby Plantation though did not deny or interposed any objection to Madina Town's allegation of land encroachment, but wants perceived "presume confusion" between Madina Town and Nimba Point be sorted out before progress can be made because the Plantation database recognizes Nimba Point as project affected community and not Madina Town.

But in reaction, Madina Town argued that there has been no quarrel with Nimba Point formerly a Compound, which was given birth by Madina in 1940s. "We are the stranger father of Nimba Point. We gave

dubbed: "Concern Citizen of Madina Land Disputes," was led by its Chairman, Boima Freeman, who vows to repeat same if the Plantation does not consider Madina Town as one of the project affected communities.

Because of the demonstration, local authorities of Grand Cape Mount County, including Assistant Development Superintendent Boima Kamara; District Commissioner Clarence Kamara and Madina Township Commissioner, Stephen Perry and others decided to mediate between Madina Town and Sime Darby with series of dialogues held but no agreement reached.

Interestingly, former President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf allegedly admitted to some mistakes made in the 63-year concession agreement signed between the Liberian Government and Sime Darby in April 2009.

An ex-official with knowledge to these agreements, told this writer that an inter-ministerial committee headed by Internal Affairs Ministry during Harrison Kanwea's tenure, co-chaired by Liberia Land Authority (LLA) under C. Othello Brandy as Lead Negotiator between government, companies and citizenry was set-up.

Being that the Committee wanted direct negotiation with residents and was agreed upon, brought Sime Darby Plantation and those communities face to face in May 2012. There and then, Sime Darby Plantation argued that Madina Town be removed from the roster because it did not constitute the project affected communities.

From thereon, Sime Darby began dealing with 17 project affected communities instead of 18 because Madina is out but continue with the encroachment on the people land by planting over 800 hectares. "Because of that we did a formal complaint and addressed same to Senators Edward Dogoseh (current) and Abel Massalley (former), Liberia Land Authority (LLA) and Internal Affairs Ministry in July, 2012," the official recalled.

In September 2013, the Liberia Land Authority held hearing into Madina Town's complaint but did not conclude when the Ebola epidemic broke out and since then nothing has been heard. In those talks, Madina Town informed the government that its land has been occupy by Sime Darby Plantation from West of Matimo River to the East of the Ibrahim Banamasi Babaginda Highway towards Lofa River as Madina Town had customary and traditional boundaries with several towns.

A customary land is owned by a community (ies) and used or managed in accordance with customary practices and norms, which may include but is not limited to: wetlands, communal forestlands, and fallow lands.

Meanwhile, Madina Township Commissioner and Convener, Stephen Perry assured the parties (Sime Darby and Madina Town) of inviting the National Bureau of Concession, Liberia Land Authority, Agriculture and Internal Affairs Ministries to the next round of talks to help with the process for its peaceful resolution before it get out of hand.

Sime Darby Plantation signed a 63-year concession agreement with the Government of Liberia to develop 220,000 hacters of land in Grand Cape Mount, Bomi, Gbarpolu and Bong into oil palm and rubber plantations. To date, the Plantation said, 10,508 ha have been planted in 5 estates, namely Matambo, Grand Cape Mount, Zodua, Bomi and Lofa estates. "Out of the total planted area of 10,508 Ha, 10,401 Ha is planted with oil palm and 107 Ha is planted with rubber.



that investors do not want to be the loser of their investment but to maximize profit; while on the other hand, the space (land) provider (residents) don't want to be empty handed but to benefit from employment opportunities.

At the moment, there is a serious land confusion between Madina Town and Sime Darby. There, residents of Madina Town are demanding compensation from the Plantation for continuously using their lands without their consent and approval since the Plantation began operational almost 10 years now.

Madina, Kon-Town, Bakar, Kenema, Denewea, Nimba Point and other towns fall within the Madina Township in Garwula District, Grand Cape Mount County. Madina Town is the last before rolling off the main Ibrahim Banamasi Babaginda Highway into the county's provincial capital, Robertsport in western Liberia.

The residents accused Sime Darby of exclusion of Project Affected Communities (PAC) and in defiance continue to use their land for investment purpose and not wanting to compensate them to improve their livelihood.

Because of the gravity of the matter, local officials

them squatter rights. Therefore, you cannot recognized the stranger and leave out the host. Nimba Point is within Madina Town which is the Headquarters of the Township," Alfred Quayjandii, Lead Negotiator/Spokesman of Madina Town argued.

Nimba Point's concerns were raised by Sime Darby Plantation's Human Resource Manager, Dao Metzger and buttressed by Zulu Seh and Samwar Fallah both Industrial Relations and Public Relations Managers respectively. They wanted to know whether or not Nimba Point and Madina Town have had in-house discussion to resolve their differences before coming to the meditation?

That question was not answered but remained in the air. Nimba Point's Representative, Chief James Mator, Sr. did not follow the argument, and could also not deny nor confirm issues of squatter rights as offspring of Madina Town in the 1940s.

"I can't be definite with any statement here until I go and consult with the elders in the town (Nimba Point), than when we returned, I shall state our position," the Chief Mator stated.

The mediation effort came after Madina Town's residents went on the rampage in September paralyzing normal operations at the Planation before the intervention of government. The mass action

# My mind is functioning well

Ex-President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf for the first time here denies reports in the media that she told investigators that at 80, she is too old to remember anything, particularly issues about the alleged missing 15.5 billion Liberian banknotes.

The HOT PEPPER newspaper, one of the dailies in Monrovia ran two stories on its frontpage last week, quoting former President Sirleaf as saying at 80 years, she is “too old to remember things.”

Madam Sirleaf officially turned 80 on Monday, October 29, 2018 and held a quiet celebration at her private residence opposite James Spriggs Payne Airfield in Monrovia attended by family members, friends, former and current officials. President George Manneh Weah accompanied by Finance Minister Sameul Tweah, and other members of his cabinet, briefly graced the occasion.

Speaking Monday with BBC Stringer Jonathan Paye-layleh, Madam Sirleaf responds that anybody who made such assertion needs to go and look at themselves, adding, “Do I look like somebody to say I am



80 years and I can't remember; Come on. You got a foolish paper here that's always doing sensational things and those sensational things are not true.”

The former President maintains that there is absolutely no fact to that. “I'm very strong; my mind is functioning well, and so that's strictly propaganda and nobody should listen to that”, she adds.

However, Madam Sirleaf

confirms some investigators met with her. “And I told them everything I do, every decision I have made, every action I have taken, is not by word of mouth; it's by paper; it's by document. Anybody wants to know anything I have done, please go to the records of the Ministry of State, it's written there, and they will (provide) full clarification on anything, because I don't just talk, I write anything I do, and so go and read the records.”

A government investigative team is probing circumstances surrounding the alleged missing money with several high profile personalities being interrogated, including former executive governor of the Central Bank of Liberia J. Milton Weeks. Madam Sirleaf's own son at the CBL Charles Sirleaf, was also called in for questioning, but subsequently left off the hook.

At the same time, the United States Embassy near Monrovia recently announced through USAID that it has reached out to independent, internationally recognized firms with specialization in forensic investigations to conduct a scoping mission that could ascertain the basic facts surrounding the alleged missing currency.

The report in the media followed the alleged disappearance of Liberian banknotes, totally about 15.5 billion that were printed abroad and brought into the country.

The government thru the Ministry of Justice confirmed ongoing investigation “surrounding the arrival of containers and bags of moneys into the country, by and thru the Freeport of Monrovia and the Roberts International

Airport, and that initial findings indicate that the containers and bags of moneys allegedly arrived between November 2017, prior to the inauguration of the current Government, and August 2018” after the inception of the Weah administration.

However, the current Executive Governor of the Central Bank of Liberia Nathaniel Patray, says no money is missing.

“The Central Bank of Liberia wants to clarify to the general public and our partners in progress that there is no 16 billion Liberian Dollars missing, as has been erroneously reported in the media. The CBL has no records showing that monies printed and under its authority have not yet been delivered into its reserve vaults. Records from Crane Currency of Sweden, which was contracted to print the money, show that Crane delivered L\$15.5 billion through the Freeport of Monrovia and the Roberts International Airport between 2016 and 2018, and that all these monies were logged by the CBL and delivered into the reserve vaults of the CBL”, Governor Patray maintains.

Story by Jonathan Browne

## Father of Zogoes

By E. J. Nathaniel Daygbor

President George Manneh Weah has described Montserrado County Representative Solomon George as a ‘father of zogoes,’ saying he lived with the lawmaker as a young man in

National Youth Day amid laughter from the audience in Paynesville.

Zogoe is an unofficial nomenclature identifying disadvantaged youths here or wayward folks in the Liberian society.

“I'm surprised that my

called ‘bottle seller.’”

Zogoes are youths who take in drugs, steal and sleep in the streets, and many of them appear to give up in life.

Earlier, Rep. George had himself called President Weah Chief Zogoe in a comical manner, claiming that the president collected items from dumpsite during his youth as part of his struggle.

He says today, those who go on dumpsite to collect materials to sell are zogoes.

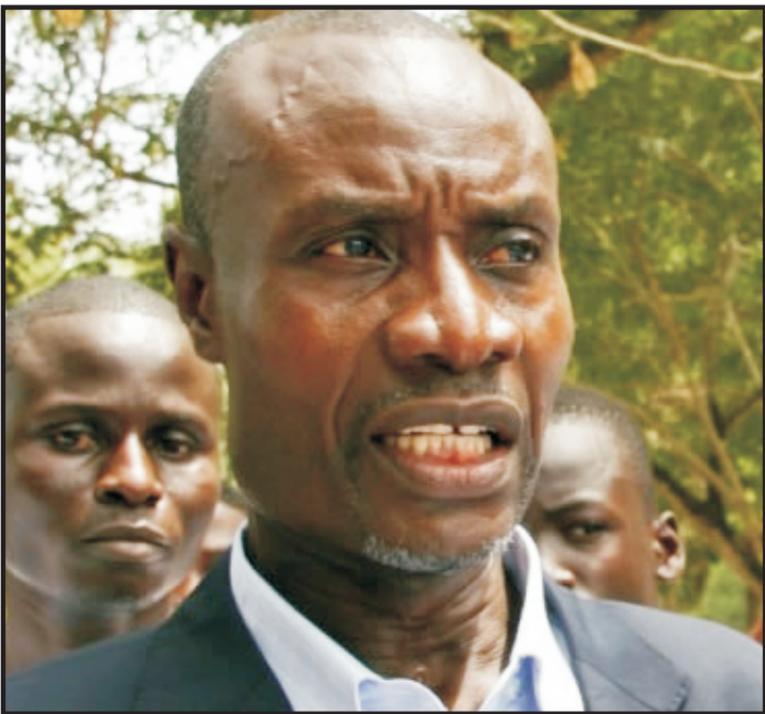
“This man used to pick up bottles from the dumpsite to sell to make living. Today he is the president, Republic of Liberia,” George says.

The drama unfolded when Rep. George was invited to the stage to speak at the youth program, given his position as House Committee on Youth and Sports.

Rep. George apparently attempted to inspire young people to push further in desire to achieving their respective goals in life when branded the president as zogoe who struggled from the bottom to reach the peak.

“SO don't see your present condition to stop you from achieving your desired dream, and the best opportunity for you is education and determination,” he says.--

Edited by Winston W. Parley



those days.

“When I was young, I lived with the father of the Zogoes which is Solomon George. So he's the original father of the Zogoes,” President Weah said Monday, 29 October during celebration of the 49th

brother Solomon George is calling me Zogoe,” President Weah says, as he recalls that during the time of his youth, people were named after everything they did.

He says once you were selling bottles, you were

## Stop tearing

Starts from back page

to look at the others around the world.

“Yes, you are supposed to be independent, you are supposed to be the conscious of society, you supposed to be the watchdog; we honor you for that, we praise you for that. But your sensationalism goes too far,” she observes.

And in party politics, ex-President Sirleaf says she has never left her former ruling Unity Party (UP), saying she wants to know who has ever removed her from the party in response to journalists' inquiry with her concerning alleged UP's call for her return to the party.

“How do you expel the person who made the party? Y'all please tell me this one ..., how, by whom?” she asks.

Mrs. Sirleaf adds that she is a partisan of the UP, and she “always has been” and “always will be.”

“I brought this party to two victories and you say somebody say I'm not there? They better go [and] look at themselves,” she notes.

Concerning her birthday, the former president says celebrating her 80th birthday means she has been very much blessed by God [with] hard work, rising above all the obstacles and standing strong.

In her new life as former president, she says celebrating her birthday is still the same thing because she celebrates it with the “same friends, same associates, same work mates, same supporters and same enemies.”

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# Stop tearing Liberia down

## --Ex-President Sirleaf tells Liberians



By **Winston W. Parley**

**E**x-President Ellen Johnson - Sirleaf is pleading with Liberians to stop tearing the country down and tearing each other apart, in the wake of bitter political differences here.

"Liberians need to stop tearing each other down; tearing the country down. They need to be united,

connected, that doesn't say you can't have a difference," Mrs. Sirleaf said Monday, 29 October in interview with journalists at her 80th birthday celebration at her residence in Monrovia.

She did not cite a specific issue regarding the bad politics here, but Liberia appears to remain glaringly politically charged for a variety of reasons, ranging from alleged

missing billions of local banknotes being probed by U.S. experts to a hard economy that sees reports of some businesses scaling down, high prices and exchange rate, among others.

The immediate past president argues that "difference is an important part of intelligent people," but they do not need to tear the country down for their disagreements.

In advancing options for Liberians to unite, former President Sirleaf urges the Liberian media too to be professional and help their country.

"When the media learns to be as professional as they should, then I think we'll get somewhere," she says.

Mrs. Sirleaf, indicates that the media here need to help the country and "stop spoiling" it, encouraging media practitioners here



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# BREAKING: Real Madrid SACK Lopetegui

**R**eal Madrid officially confirmed that Julen Lopetegui is no longer the coach of Real Madrid and his replacement will be Santiago Hernan Solari.

Real have failed to win in the league since beating Espanyol on September 22, losing to Sevilla, Alaves, Levante and drawing with Atletico Madrid, before Sunday's 5-1 thrashing by Barcelona at the Nou Camp.

Lopetegui, 52, has now lost two jobs in the space of less than five months.

He was fired by the Spanish Football Federation as coach of the national team the day before the World Cup started in June, due to his having planned his move to Real without informing the Spanish Football Federation.

Announcing his sacking on Monday night, Real Madrid said: "This decision aims to change

the dynamics of the first team, when all the objectives of this season are still achievable.

"The Board of Directors understands that there is great disproportion between the quality of the staff of Real Madrid and the results obtained to date.

"The club thanks Julen Lopetegui and all his technical team for their effort and work and wishes them the best in their professional career."



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