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# The New Dawn

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**-Simeon Freeman**

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# Continental News

## Tanzania tanker explosion victims buried in mass funeral

Tanzania has held a mass funeral for people who died when an overturned fuel tanker exploded on Saturday.

Officials have said people were trying to siphon fuel from the vehicle on a main road in the Morogoro region when it exploded, killing 71.

Ahead of the funeral, hundreds of relatives visited the hospital to try to identify their dead family members, but many were burnt beyond recognition. As a result, officials have promised to do DNA tests.

This is the latest in a series of similar disasters across Africa, and Tanzania's President John Magufuli has pleaded people to stop risking their lives by siphoning fuel from broken-down tankers.

"There are vehicles that carry dangerous fuel oil, as in this case in Morogoro, there are others that carry toxic chemicals or explosives, let's stop this practice, please," AFP news agency quotes him

as saying on Saturday.

Mr Magufuli declared three days of mourning. The incident occurred in Morogoro region, about 200 km (124 miles) west of the port city of Dar es Salaam, the country's commercial capital.

The city of Morogoro is on a

major route for transporting cargo and fuel from the port.

"Many people died here, even those who were not stealing fuel because this is a busy place," said eyewitness Daniel Ngogo, quoted by Reuters news agency. Local Police Chief Willbrod

Mtafungwa said many of those killed were motorbike taxi drivers. Pictures posted online show flaming wreckage scattered over a wide area and charred bodies lying on the ground.

On Sunday relatives grieved as coffins lined a football field. Some relatives took their relatives coffins to bury them in private funerals. Correspondents say disasters like this have happened all too frequently in parts of Africa where some people are willing to take huge

risks to remove fuel from tankers and pipelines.

Last month at least 45 people were killed when a crashed fuel tanker exploded in Nigeria's northern Benue state.

Nearly 80 people died in May in a similar incident near the airport of Niger's capital Niamey.

Occasionally such disasters have led to a much higher death toll. In 2010 292 people were killed in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and five years later 203 died in South Sudan. BBC



Authorities have promised to conduct DNA tests on the unrecognisable bodies

## Eritrea 'turning teenagers into slave conscripts'

Eritrea has been accused of turning school pupils and teachers into slaves through a repressive system of indefinite national service despite hopes that a peace deal with Ethiopia would end conscription.

The agreement ending a two-decade border dispute was signed more than a year

ago. The BBC's Emmanuel Igunza says Eritreans have been running online campaigns calling for the closure of the notorious and isolated Sawa military training academy.

But a Human Rights Watch report says thousands of young people each year are forced into compulsory military training even before they

finish their education. It says all final year secondary pupils are sent to a Sawa, where they are subjected to military-style discipline and harsh punishments for even minor mistakes. Some are sent into the army, others into teaching or other government jobs where they remain indefinitely.

Teachers are also forced to work at Sawa for an indefinite period where they receive poor pay.

The report - "They Are Making Us into Slaves, Not Educating Us" - says this has been having a devastating impact on the quality of the country's education system, prompting large numbers of both teachers and students to flee the country. "It's unlimited service," a 25-year-old, who had to teach at Sawa and fled last year, told the HRW.

"If you are conscripted to teach physics, you will be a physics teacher for life."

Last week, Eritrea marked 25 years since the start of national service, saying it had greatly benefited the country.

But campaigners say Eritrea



National service is meant to be for 18 months but can last indefinitely

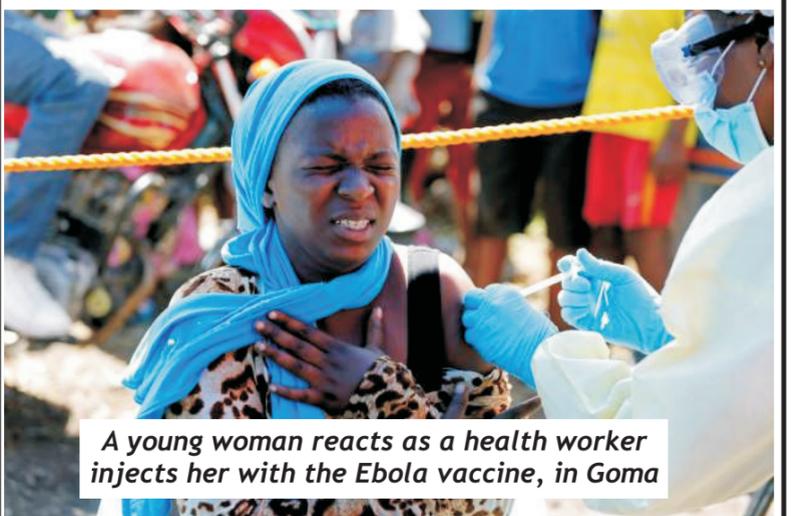
## WHO says no new Ebola cases in Goma

The World Health Organisation has vaccinated over 1,300 people who potentially came into contact with the Ebola virus in the Congolese city of Goma, it said on Sunday, helping contain what many feared would be a rapid spread in an urban center.

A year-long Ebola outbreak in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo has killed at least 1,800, the second biggest toll ever, and efforts to contain

contacts, and 1,314 contacts, contacts of contacts and frontline workers (have been) vaccinated to date," the WHO said in a statement on Sunday. No new confirmed cases have been reported in Goma since the WHO's last report on Aug. 2.

The use of an experimental Ebola vaccine, developed by Merck, has proven to be a key weapon against the hemorrhagic



A young woman reacts as a health worker injects her with the Ebola vaccine, in Goma

the virus have been hobbled by militia violence and some local resistance to outside interference.

Goma, a lakeside city of nearly 2 million people on the Rwandan border, has been on high alert over the past week after a gold miner with a large family contaminated several people before dying himself. "Ongoing vaccination activities have reached the majority (98%) of eligible

fever, although reaching contacts in rural areas beset by violence has proven difficult.

The vaccine's success has been most obvious in cities where contacts can be easier to trace, helping avoid the widespread havoc seen in densely populated areas during a 2013-2016 outbreak in West Africa that killed over 11,000 people. AFP

needs to change given that relations with its neighbour have improved.

"Now that peace with Ethiopia is restored, reforms

on human rights, starting with the rights and freedom of the country's youth, need to follow," said HRW's Laetitia Bader in statement. BBC

# EDITORIAL

## President Weah is vulnerable

POLITICAL OBSERVERS AND pundits in Liberia are wondering whether President George Manneh Weah is conscious of his surroundings and his vulnerability politically. Unfolding situations around the President in the past few weeks are not pleasant and should be reasons for concern.

**THEY RANGE FROM** the disgraceful defeat of his governing Coalition for Democratic Change in the recent Montserrado County Senatorial By-election to disappointment and outcries within the CDC plus public threats from his political bedfellow and key supporter, Senator Prince Yormie Johnson whether to part company with the “Saye Gbehkugbeh” he asked his kinsmen in Nimba during the 2017 poll to elect as President or to continuously give support to his leadership.

**BESIDES, THE GOVERNING** CDC appears to be rapidly losing confidence in its ability to maintain grip on power less than two years after it won the Presidency.

**THESE INDICATIONS AND** more point to the fact that all is not well around the Liberian leader who won over 60 percent of the total votes at the poll in 2017.

**BUT MR. WEAH SEEMS** not to be conscious that he is losing grip on power too early for the six years tenure he has. Or if he did, the President is turning blind eyes on unfolding realities, believing it is still business as usual.

**HAS MR. WEAH** come to the knowledge that time matters in politics, particularly if voters' expectations were raised to the sky unnecessarily as was experienced in the 2017 presidential election? Oh year! After the victory euphoria from the ballot box, the reality emerges.

**THE REALITY IS** there is a vast difference between campaign speeches and the truth. The truth is President Weah is overwhelmed by Liberia's challenges, some of which he has contributed by surrounding himself with an empire of cronies.

**IT IS HARDLY** believable that the George Weah who lifted hands of candidates in campaigns and they unanimously get elected in previous elections, would have taken an entire day to rally support for CDC's Pualita Wie and yet she is massively defeated in Montserrado County that he claims to be his stronghold. But this is exactly what transpired in the July 29 senatorial by-election.

**HOW TIME HAS** changed the politics so rapidly! But the President and the CDC are not recalibrating. Instead, they seem bent on ranting jives and threats to counter public dissent thru “flesh and blood.”

**PRESIDENT WEAH AND** the ruling establishment should beware, or else, they risk an end that could be far disastrous than now.

**The New Dawn**  
TRULY INDEPENDENT

# COMMENTARY

By Mohamed A. El-Erian

## Trade Disruption Is a Symptom of a Deeper Malaise

*Trade tensions are a symptom rather than a cause of the world's underlying economic and financial malaise. Moreover, an excessive focus on trade could deflect policymakers' attention from other measures needed to ensure faster and more inclusive growth in a genuinely stable financial environment.*

**N**EW YORK - It's only a matter of time until the escalating tensions between China and the United States prompt many more economists to warn of an impending global economic recession coupled with financial instability. On August 5, Bloomberg News said that the yield curve, a closely watched market metric, “Blares Loudest US Recession Warning Since 2007.” And Larry Summers, a former US Treasury Secretary who was also closely involved in crisis-management efforts in 2008-09, recently tweeted that “we may well be at the most dangerous financial moment ... since 2009.”

Many economists argue that resolving US-China trade tensions is the best way to avoid significant global economic and financial disruption. Yet, while necessary, this would be far from sufficient.

Don't get me wrong: the focus on the deteriorating relations between China and America is entirely understandable. After all, their worsening dispute increases the risk of a trade war which, coupled with a currency war, would lead to “beggar-thy-neighbor” (that is, lose-lose) outcomes cascading throughout the global economy. As growth prospects deteriorated, debt and leverage issues would come to the fore in certain countries, adding financial instability to an already damaging economic cocktail. And with the US-China row now extending beyond economics to include national-security and domestic political issues, the best-case scenario on trade is a series of ceasefires; the more likely outcome is escalating tensions.

Yet, when viewed in the broader context of the past decade, trade tensions turn out to be a symptom rather than a cause of the world's underlying economic and financial malaise. In fact, an excessive focus on trade risks is deflecting policymakers' attention from other measures needed to ensure faster and more inclusive growth in a genuinely stable financial environment.

Policymakers must also contend with growing political pressure on central banks, the backlash against the inequality trifecta (of income, wealth, and opportunity), the politics of anger, the growth of anti-establishment movements, the loss of trust in governments and expert opinion, regional economic and geopolitical tensions, the growing risk of financial instability, threats to long-term financial-protection products, and a general sense of economic insecurity.

As I argued in *The Only Game in Town*, all of these recent developments - and also, of course, the growing US-China tensions - are related in a meaningful way to two basic and persistent features of the global economy since the 2008 financial crisis.

The first is the prolonged period in which economic growth has been not only too low but also insufficiently inclusive. As a result, growing segments of the population have felt marginalized, alienated, and angry - leading to unexpected election outcomes, the rise of

populist and nationalist movements, and, in a few cases, social unrest.

The second post-crisis feature is the persistent over-reliance on the pain-numbing but distortionary medicine of central-bank liquidity, rather than a more balanced policy mix that seeks to ease the (mainly structural, but also cyclical) impediments to faster, more inclusive growth. Monetary policy has not been very effective in boosting sustainable growth, but it has lifted asset prices significantly. This has further fueled complaints that the system favors the already-rich and privileged rather than serving the broader population - let alone helping more disadvantaged groups.

If both these features persist, the global economy will soon enough come to an uncomfortable binary prospect on the road ahead. At this “T-junction,” the current, increasingly unsustainable path will give way either to a much worse outcome involving recessions, financial instability, and rising political and social tensions, or, more optimistically, to a pick-up in inclusive growth and genuine financial stability as the governance system finally responds to popular pressure.

Moreover, the journey to the neck of this T-junction is itself increasingly uncertain. In particular, the protracted use of unconventional monetary policies has entailed costs and risks that have intensified over time. These include attacks on the operational autonomy of central banks, the excessive decoupling of asset prices from their underlying economic and corporate fundamentals, and systemic overpromising of liquidity to end users (particularly in the non-bank sector). Today, a policy mistake or a market accident could make the journey much faster and a lot bumpier.

To avoid a nasty outcome for the global economy and financial system, China and America need to resolve their differences in the context of a more comprehensive policy compact that also involves other leading economies (especially Europe).

Efforts to revitalize free but fairer trade should start by addressing genuine US and European grievances vis-à-vis China regarding intellectual-property theft, forced transfer of technology, excessive subsidization, and other unfair trade and investment practices. And this in turn should serve as the foundation for a comprehensive multilateral effort to remove constraints on actual and potential growth.<sup>1</sup>

Such an initiative would include infrastructure rehabilitation and modernization in Europe and the US, more balanced fiscal policies in Europe and a stronger regional economic architecture, stronger social safety nets around the world, and targeted liberalization and deregulation in China and Europe.

With concerted global action of this type, the world economy could navigate the upcoming T-junction favorably. Without it, current complaints about economic and financial instability and insecurity could pale in comparison to what comes next.

# OP-ED

By Jeffrey Frankel

## The Currency Manipulation Game

**C**AMBRIDGE - The trade war between the United States and China is heating up again, with US President Donald Trump abruptly announcing plans to impose a 10% tariff on the \$300 billion worth of imports from China that he had so far left untouched. The Chinese authorities then allowed their currency, the renminbi, to fall below the symbolic threshold of CNY7 per US dollar. The Trump administration promptly responded by naming China a "currency manipulator" - the first time the US had done that to any country in 25 years. Pundits declared a currency war, and investors immediately sent global stock markets lower.

The US assertion that the recent depreciation of the renminbi amounts to currency manipulation is not true. It would be more correct to say that the Chinese authorities gave in to market pressure - the immediate source of which was none other than Trump's announcement of the new tariffs.

Economic theory says that tariffs do not improve a country's trade balance in the way their proponents think they do. When an exchange rate is market-determined, it automatically moves to offset the tariff. Intuitively, if tariffs discourage American consumers from buying imported Chinese goods, then demand for renminbi weakens, and the currency's price falls.

The task of evaluating whether America's trading partners manipulate their currencies lies with the US Treasury Department, which uses three criteria. Two of the three coincide with internationally agreed yardsticks for manipulation under the Articles of Agreement of the International Monetary Fund: persistent one-sided intervention by the country to push down the value of its currency, and a large current-account surplus. Neither of these apply to China today.

Since the US Congress assigned this task to the Treasury in 1988, the Department has fulfilled its mandate professionally, regardless of who was in the White House. The sudden decision to label China a currency manipulator, despite it not meeting the criteria, is yet another case of Trump heedlessly running roughshod over established norms, professional expertise, the long-term credibility of US institutions, and even the plain meaning of the law.

To be sure, there was a time when China did act to keep the renminbi substantially undervalued. From 2004 to mid-2014, and particularly in 2004-08, the Chinese authorities intervened heavily to slow down the currency's market-driven appreciation. Over this ten-year period, however, the renminbi still appreciated by 30% against the dollar, peaking in 2014.

Then the wind changed, and market sentiment turned against the renminbi. For the past five years, contrary to what Trump and some other US politicians often claim, the Chinese authorities have intervened to slow down the depreciation of the currency. In 2015 and 2016, the People's Bank of China spent \$1 trillion in foreign-exchange reserves (out of a total of \$4 trillion) in an effort to prop up the exchange rate - by far the largest intervention in history to support the value of a currency.

The Chinese authorities' recent decision to let the renminbi break the CNY7 barrier may well have been a deliberate response to Trump's latest tariff offensive. At the same time, however, China remains concerned that its currency might slide too far too fast and destabilize financial markets.

Trump, meanwhile, is a master at accusing others of transgressions that he himself has committed or is considering. While accusing China of currency manipulation, he wants to do the same with the dollar. Not content with publicly pressuring the US Federal Reserve to cut interest rates, Trump has explicitly attempted to talk down the currency. Clearly, he sees the world as a game of competitive depreciation.

The Trump administration has even considered the possibility of intervening directly in the foreign-exchange market to weaken the dollar. ("I could do that in two seconds if I wanted," Trump said on July 26.)

Yet such a move seems unlikely. The last US effort to depreciate the dollar against other currencies, the 1985 Plaza Accord, worked only because it was part of a coordinated G7 initiative to correct an acknowledged exchange-rate misalignment.

If America were now to engage in a pure currency war against China, it would find itself outmatched, because the US Treasury has only a fraction of the firepower available to the Chinese authorities for foreign-exchange intervention. Furthermore, no matter how crazy US policy gets, investors continue to respond to any uptick in global uncertainty by piling into dollars, the world's number-one safe-haven currency. Paradoxically, therefore, Trumpian volatility can send the dollar up rather than down.

More generally, major governments have so far abided by a 2013 agreement to refrain from competitive depreciation, in the core sense of explicitly talking down currencies or intervening in foreign-exchange markets. But if currency wars are defined much more broadly to include central banks' decisions to ease monetary policy with the side effect of depreciating their currencies, then the windmills at which Trump is quixotically tilting may not be wholly imaginary. For example, the Bank of England responded to the Brexit referendum with monetary stimulus that depreciated the pound. More recently, the European Central Bank signaled a further easing of monetary policy in response to slower eurozone growth.

Fears of currency wars (or competitive depreciation) have always gone hand in hand with the desire to avoid trade wars. Both concerns are rooted in the "beggar-thy-neighbor" policies of the Great Depression, when countries tried to gain a competitive advantage vis-à-vis their trading partners in a collectively futile exercise.

In truth, however, currency wars are less damaging than trade wars. Whereas a currency war is likely to result in looser global monetary policy, an all-out trade war could derail the global economy and financial markets.<sup>1</sup>

The real significance of the US decision to label China a currency manipulator, therefore, is that it represents a further escalation of the two countries' avoidable trade war. And, sadly, Fed interest-rate cuts may give US politicians the impression that monetary policy can repair the damage caused by their own trade-policy mistakes.

# OPINION

By Joseph E. Stiglitz

## Trump's Deficit Economy

**N**EW YORK - In the new world wrought by US President Donald Trump, where one shock follows another, there is never time to think through fully the implications of the events with which we are bombarded. In late July, the Federal Reserve Board reversed its policy of returning interest rates to more normal levels, after a decade of ultra-low rates in the wake of the Great Recession. Then, the United States had another two mass gun killings in under 24 hours, bringing the total for the year to 255 - more than one a day. And a trade war with China, which Trump had tweeted would be "good, and easy to win," entered a new, more dangerous phase, rattling markets and posing the threat of a new cold war.

At one level, the Fed move was of little import: a 25-basis-point change will have little consequence. The idea that the Fed could fine-tune the economy by carefully timed changes in interest rates should by now have long been discredited - even if it provides entertainment for Fed watchers and employment for financial journalists. If lowering the interest rate from 5.25% to essentially zero had little impact on the economy in 2008-09, why should we think that lowering rates by 0.25% will have any observable effect? Large corporations are still sitting on hoards of cash: it's not a lack of liquidity that's stopping them from investing.<sup>1</sup>

Long ago, John Maynard Keynes recognized that while a sudden tightening of monetary policy, restricting the availability of credit, could slow the economy, the effects of loosening policy when the economy is weak can be minimal. Even employing new instruments such as quantitative easing can have little effect, as Europe has learned. In fact, the negative interest rates being tried by several countries may, perversely, weaken the economy as a result of unfavorable effects on bank balance sheets and thus lending.

The lower interest rates do lead to a lower exchange rate. Indeed, this may be the principal channel through which Fed policy works today. But isn't that nothing more than "competitive devaluation," for which the Trump administration roundly criticizes China? And that, predictably, has been followed by other countries lowering their exchange rate, implying that any benefit to the US economy through the exchange-rate effect will be short-lived. More ironic is the fact that the recent decline in China's exchange rate came about because of the new round of American protectionism and because China stopped interfering with the exchange rate - that is, stopped supporting it.

But, at another level, the Fed action spoke volumes. The US economy was supposed to be "great." Its 3.7% unemployment rate and first-quarter growth of 3.1% should have been the envy of the advanced countries. But scratch a little bit beneath the surface, and there was plenty to worry about. Second-quarter growth plummeted to 2.1%. Average hours worked in manufacturing in July sank to the lowest level since 2011. Real wages are only slightly above their level a decade ago, before the Great Recession. Real investment as a percentage of GDP is well below levels in the late 1990s, despite a tax cut allegedly intended to spur business spending, but which was used mainly to finance share buybacks instead.

America should be in a boom, with three enormous fiscal-stimulus measures in the past three years. The 2017 tax cut, which mainly benefited billionaires and corporations, added some \$1.5-2 trillion to the ten-year deficit. An almost \$300 billion increase in expenditures over two years averted a government shutdown in 2018. And at the end of July, a new agreement to avoid another shutdown added another \$320 billion of spending. If it takes trillion-dollar annual deficits to keep the US economy going in good times, what will it take when things are not so rosy?

The US economy has not been working for most Americans, whose incomes have been stagnating - or worse - for decades. These adverse trends are reflected in declining life expectancy. The Trump tax bill made matters worse by compounding the problem of decaying infrastructure, weakening the ability of the more progressive states to support education, depriving millions more people of health insurance, and, when fully implemented, leading to an increase in taxes for middle-income Americans, worsening their plight.

Redistribution from the bottom to the top - the hallmark not only of Trump's presidency, but also of preceding Republican administrations - reduces aggregate demand, because those at the top spend a smaller fraction of their income than those below. This weakens the economy in a way that cannot be offset even by a massive giveaway to corporations and billionaires. And the enormous Trump fiscal deficits have led to huge trade deficits, far larger than under Obama, as the US has had to import capital to finance the gap between domestic savings and investment.

Trump promised to get the trade deficit down, but his profound lack of understanding of economics has led to it increasing, just as most economists predicted it would. Despite Trump's bad economic management and his attempt to talk the dollar down, and the Fed's lowering of interest rates, his policies have resulted in the US dollar remaining strong, thereby discouraging exports and encouraging imports. Economists have repeatedly tried to explain to him that trade agreements may affect which countries the US buys from and sells to, but not the magnitude of the overall deficit.

In this as in so many other areas, from exchange rates to gun control, Trump believes what he wants to believe, leaving those who can least afford it to pay the price.

# National Road Fund Finalizes Annual Road Maintenance Expenditure Program

## ... Enhances Government Road Connectivity Agenda

By Media Hub Liberia

During his inauguration as President of Liberia in January, 2018, Dr. George MannehWeah declared that Liberians would not be spectators to the Country's economy. This implies that Liberian citizens would have the opportunity to participate or engage in business ventures from which they would earn a living, create jobs and ultimately contribute to growth of the economy by paying their taxes and other lawful levies which would be used to develop the Country.

To achieve the milestone, the President pronounced that the Government would focus on efforts to build and rehabilitate public infrastructures such as roads. This is why in the national development plan for Liberia dubbed: Pro-poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD), the administration seeks to avert weak domestic contracting and consulting industry which lack technical capacity; inadequate materials testing facilities; negligible road maintenance interventions; and unpredictable weather due to global climatic change, low Government funding and investment in the road sector as well as the lack of human capacity in the infrastructure sector which have impeded progress to intervene in road and bridge works in Liberia.

With the urge on the part of the Government to help improve the living conditions of Liberians, it has projected in the PAPD that by 2023 it would reduce infrastructure deficits by expanding the Country's road network to help ease the cost of transport and doing business in the Country. Also, the administration foresees that the road expansion would support decent employment opportunities, and transform the living conditions of the poor and the vulnerable.

To this end, already, a mechanism to regulate the use of the Country's road network which is expected to be expanded under the PAPD was passed into Law as the National Road Fund of Liberia in December 2016.

Accordingly, the Law empowers the Fund to finance the maintenance of roads and bridges; raise capital through Government-approved appropriations, Government-arranged grants, and loans and levy road user charges; put in place administrative structures to collect; manage and disburse funds to and on behalf of road and bridge work agencies in Liberia. Similarly, the Law obliges the Fund to ensure proper governance and oversight of monies to the extent of giving appropriations to annual road maintenance expenditure programs which road and bridge work agencies would submit.

In pursuit of its obligation to approve annual road maintenance expenditure programs, the National Road Fund of Liberia has assembled a technical working group in Buchanan, Grand Bassa County to finalize the 2019/2020 Annual Road Maintenance Expenditure Program (ARMEP), and to develop a procedural disbursement manual/ MoU for the National Road Fund.

Key technicians participating in the weeklong session are drawn from the Ministries of Public Works, Transport, Commerce & Industry, Finance & Development Planning, Internal Affairs and Information Culture & Tourism as well as the Public Procurement and Concession Commission.

Also attending the technical meeting are representatives of the World Bank (WB), Millennium Challenge Account-Liberia (MCA-L), Deutsche Gesellschaft Fur Internationale Zusammenarbeit GIZ, European Union (EU), African Development Bank (AfDB) and the United States Aid for International Development (USAID).

Liberia's Road Fund is a replica of Tanzania, Uganda, Namibia and Ghana - all of which reaps loftily from the mechanisms. The progress recorded by the young Liberia Fund in a short period of time, partly prompted the African Road Maintenance Funds Association (ARMFA) to enroll the National Road Fund of Liberia as its newest member having been established in 2003 in Libreville, Gabon with a membership 34 Countries including Liberia.

The ARMFA is a platform for sharing experiences in road maintenance and safety practices, and an important network among African Road Managers and several stakeholders that work on infrastructural development, maintenance and safety across the continent. As a result of the enrolment, the National Road Fund of Liberia now benefits from older Funds' lesson-learned during their formative days, shares knowledge and technological improvements in road maintenance while the ARMFA designs a uniform system on how road fund managements must function on the Continent.

For purposes of check and balance as well as oversight, the Law requires an Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee which is being chaired by the Minister of Public Works, and has the Ministers of Finance & Development Planning, Commerce & Industry, Internal Affairs, and Transport as members.

This set of objectives and control measures in place, the Fund moved into action in 2017 with focus on setting up and, recruiting personnel including a Fund Manager and other technical staff to steer daily work and in May 2018 formally opened its offices with an array of national and international stakeholders and partners announcing collaboration and support.

In an exclusive interview early this year, a highly placed source at the GIZ thought the structures that were being put in place at the NRF were likely to significantly lead to

Liberia having sustainable and long-lasting roads and admonished road users to follow the rules and regulations on road usage. In the same view, the GIZ official suggested the need for transparency of internal processes to award road work contracts mainly to Liberian companies.

So, as important as the good impression of the Fund is among donors, so was it to hear from its lead administrator about how forthcoming the development partners have been with their support. According to Road Fund Manager Boniface Satu, there exist a terrific relationship, collaboration and partnership with the National Road Fund of Liberia, the Government, stakeholders and donors. For example, he said USAID would refurbish the National Road Fund's offices and provide logistical support including vehicles once they have been relocated from the Ministry of Finance & Development Planning building.



National Road Fund Manager  
Boniface Satu

Like the USAID, the World Bank has been on board with unwavering support and strategic partnership with the Fund. Recently, the Bank provided US\$250,000 of the US\$500,000 it had committed to aid in the digitization of the entire financial system of the Fund to ensure transparency. As a result of the provision, the Fund has recruited the Enterprise Resources Planning, an international firm to automate or digitize its books.

Similarly, the African Development Bank (AfDB) remains supportive of the National Road Fund of Liberia. The AfDB has committed to provide over US\$200,000 to enable the Fund up turn its institutional support and capacity-building. This disbursement will add to the mammoth assistance the Bank has delivered to the Ministry of Public Works which, from the onset, contributed to the resources used to set up the National Road Fund Office and purchase furniture, equipment and vehicles.

The issue of integrity, honesty and transparency is as paramount as the support that triggers in from donors and even through Government's budgetary support. At a reception hosted by the Millennium Challenge Account-Liberia and Millennium Challenge Corporation weeks ago, Finance & Development Planning Minister Samuel Tweah assured development partners and donors that the Government remains committed to ensuring the National Road Fund maintains its integrity and guaranteed that road maintenance fees collected by the Liberia Revenue Authority, Liberia Petroleum Refining Company and other authorized collectors would go toward

adequately financing the rehabilitation of roads and bridges throughout the Country.

In fulfillment of this, to date, the Government ensures that funds collected from fuel levies consistently flow into the National Road Fund Escrow Account at the Central Bank of Liberia (CBL) even though amid challenges associated with slow business transactions which the Finance Minister alleviated when he reached a Memorandum of Understanding with the CBL to ensure the funds were "Ring-Fenced" and transferred automatically daily without interference.

The milestone on the part of the Government, the National Road Fund management considers a move that demonstrates the administration's reassurance to stakeholders that it would ensure the process of sustainability of the national road network of Liberia.

Currently, the National Road Fund has provided US\$4 million to the Ministry of Public Works to rehabilitate roads in Grand Kru, Sinoe and Gbarpolu Counties with the durable chip-seal pavement and to rebuild bridges on the Monrovia-Buchanan highway including damaged bridge along the Roberts International Airport thoroughfare.

In the same line, the Fund has given cash to implement a public road safety program being carried out by the Ministry of Transport, and funding to conduct a Nationwide Road Conditional Survey, and eyes the possibility to increase its revenue intake by instituting the additional road user charges outlined in the National Road Fund Act December 2016.

To that effect, the National Road Fund contracted the American Procurement Services Corporation to provide technical support. In this role, the APS determined additional road user charging system not listed in the NRF Act that is applicable to Liberia; designed methods and procedures that are economically and legally acceptable for collecting applicable charging system. It also ensured that the recommended charging system are economically profitable for the NRF; and ensured that the recommended charging systems are economically, socially and legally acceptable to road users.

In compliance with the Law, National Road Fund of Liberia must charge vehicles plying the roads based on each automobile's mass, length, width, height, loading, axle and distance. Also, the national road user regulator must install tolls at different points of the roads or bridges; impose fees on foreign vehicles entering Liberia; charge registration and license fees on vehicles and drivers; and levy petroleum products imported to Liberia. All this would generate financial resources to fund the construction and maintenance of roads and bridges; create new jobs; and help to boost Government's revenue flow.



President George MannehWeah(R) discusses with Public Works Minister Mobutu Nyepan(L) in relations to the President's Road Connectivity Agenda as prescribed in the Government of Liberia Pro-poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development

MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# Commerce reveals US\$40m

**-pending ratification of trade agreement**

By Winston W. Parley

The Ministry of Commerce here says government is poised to gain about US\$40 million from the World Bank following the ratification of a Trade Facilitation Agreement recently submitted by President George Manneh Weah.

"We'll get that ratification because there's a huge gain when that ratification is made. You're talking about something close to \$40 million that will be coming to the country when that ratification is made," Commerce Minister Prof. Wilson Tarpeh told a press conference Saturday, 10 August in Monrovia.

Minister Tarpeh disclosed that the US\$40 Million will come from the World Bank and the international community.

He explains that the ratification of an agreement called the Trade Facilitation Agreement requires the member country of the World Trade Organization (WTO) to meet certain commitments of WTO.

He recalls that Liberia ascended to the World Trade Organization in 2016, giving the country the capacity to increase its involvement in trading activities with the

rest of the world.

However, he notes that part of the post ascension to WTO activities that Liberia should have done is the ratification of the Trade Facilitation Agreement which President Weah recently submitted to the Legislature for approval.

assistance to Liberia.

The Commerce Minister reveals that beside the amount, there will be a lot of facilities and capacity building facilities available to Liberia which government is happy about.

Prof. Tarpeh expresses confidence that the government will meet up with



Minister Wilson K. Tarpeh

Minister Tarpeh stresses that the president and the government are keen about the Trade Facilitation Agreement, and describes the expected US\$40m from the international community as a substantial amount of

the ratification deadline for the Trade Facilitation Agreement, noting that the reasons for the delay in submitting the document to the Legislature was due to the preconditions that had to be cleared.

He notes that the government has a deadline of 19 August 2019 for the ratification.

Additionally, Prof. Tarpeh reveals that government has also submitted to the Legislature a bill for the establishment of the National Standard Authority which when passed, will bring Liberia to a minimum standard.

He explains that standard means that when importation is being done, the importer must make sure that the import meets minimum standards based on measurement in order to determine the quality of the import.

In further stressing the significance of establishing the National Standard Authority,

Minister Tarpeh explains that in order to trade and get investments from people, the operating environment must be predictable and ensure that there is certainty as to what the rules are.

He also adds that the environment must be stable and void of confusion because instability makes long term planning difficult for corporate investors.

Meanwhile, Minister Tarpeh announces that businesses here are cooperating with government on its demand for the acceptance of both Liberian Dollars and United States Dollars for trade.

He however encourages the public to report any incident of non-compliance by any entity that restricts its financial transaction to one currency.

## ArcelorMittal affirms ongoing commitment to Liberia

ArcelorMittal Liberia has announced that it has finalised the Detailed Feasibility Study (DFS) that was being carried out in order to identify the optimal solution for utilising the resources at Tokadeh and its other deposits.

The DFS recommends upgrades to the concentrator processing lines to reflect changed product quality demand in the seaborne market, replacement of wet tailings with dry stack tailings and treatment, and a revised life of mine plan to ensure optimal high grade product is able to meet market demand. The DFS will be delivered to the Government of Liberia for their consideration and then will be discussed formally at a review meeting soon.

Following completion of the DFS, the company has allocated funds towards

detailed engineering work which has commenced in order to progress to the next stage of the process. This is required before an investment decision on the project development can be made later this year.

The detailed analysis conducted over the last year is part of the company's commitment from 2013 when it announced a Phase 2 expansion project that envisaged the construction of 15 million tonnes of concentrate sinter fines capacity and associated infrastructure, if proven to be technically and economically feasible. This expansion project was initially delayed due to the declaration of force majeure by contractors due to the Ebola virus outbreak in West Africa a year later, and then reassessed following rapid iron ore price declines over



## NIC deputy boss lauds VAPCO Liberia

By Emmanuel Mondaye

The director for concessions at the National Investment Commission (NIC) Melvin Sheriff lauds the commitment of the Management of VAPCO Liberia Limited for its ability to pre-finance the Lock Box Mail Services Project at the Ministry of Postal Affairs.

A Liberian-owned

company, VAPCO entered into a contract with the Government of Liberia (GOL) to provide hundreds of Lock Boxes at post offices across the country, residential buildings, business premises, private homes, concessionaires, learning institutions for safe investment transactions.

The NIC Concession boss made the recognition during

the launch of the First Phase Lock Box Mail Services Project at the Postal Affairs Ministry over the weekend in Monrovia.

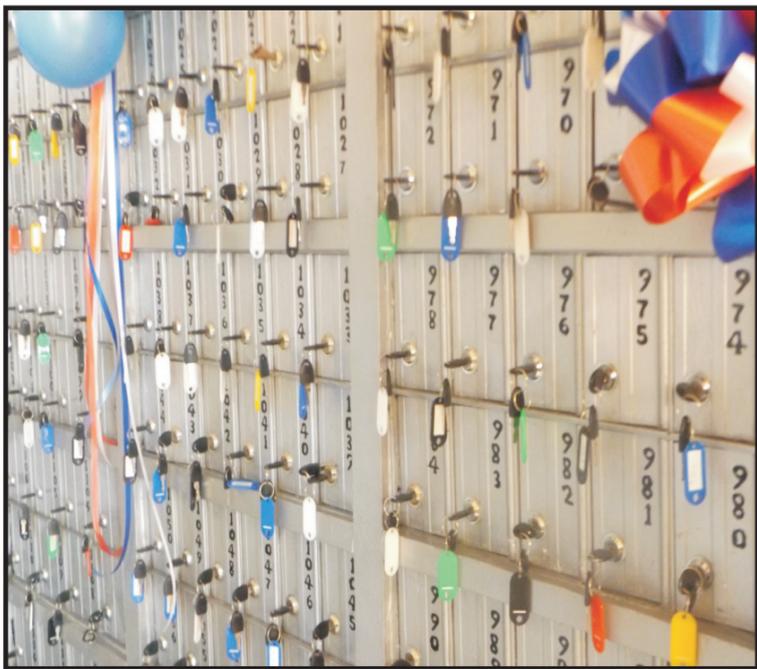
He also expressed government's desire to further straightening private investment partnership that would provide opportunity not only to perform but to demonstrate commitment to work.

VAPCO Liberia Limited is expected to rehabilitate and construct over ten thousand postal Lock Boxes thru pre-financing.

Mr. Sheriff assures that the National Investment Commission is committed to protecting government-partnerships investment to enhance the investment climate in the country at all times.

He notes that sustained government-private partnerships will see more funds being generated through service delivery by private partners who desire of investing in any area of the country's investment concessions.

In the late 70s and 80s, the



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Lock Box Mail Services which was a medium used by private investors and ordinary people whereas a Lock Box or Boxes are placed at their deposit and was 100 percent safe.

He encourages potential investors both international and local to take advantage the investment climate by investing in potential areas of the country to enhance government revenue

regeneration and provide needy services to the inhabitants of the country.

The concession director laments that millions of dollars investments were done through the Lock Box Mail Services that persistently provided complete confidentiality to mail received and delivered to investors, business partners, and others prior to the Liberian Civil War. -  
Editing by Jonathan Browne

MORE HEADLINE NEWS MORE HEADLINE NEWS

# Liberia's mailing system remains guaranteed

## --Wesseh Blamoh brags

By Lewis S. Teh

Deputy Minister of State for Presidential Affairs George Wesseh Blamoh says Liberia's mailing system remains guaranteed, despite suffering several attacks during the civil war here.

"Despite the shock the mailing system has taken in the hands of the conflict and improved communication technology, this mode of sending and receiving mail parcels and other solid materials remains indispensable, secured, and guaranteed," Mr. Blamo said on Friday, 9 August in a keynote speech.

His comments came during the dedication of the first phase of the Lockbox project held at the Ministry of Post and Telecommunications.

He boasts that the system comes with facts that directly take and bring to your doorsteps or lockboxes original compact handiwork, parcels and communication that are not altered, unscanned and un-digitized.

He argues that this is why after all, the lockbox postal

system remains unconquered in the face of the pluralism of technology.

Additionally Mr. Blamo explains that the system further remains an asset for any and all societies, big or small, as well as developed or undeveloped societies.

The Keynote speaker also adds that it is important and relieving that this government, through the Minister of Post

and Telecommunications, continues to make lockbox an integral part of the country's communication and postal tradition.

According to him, the project dedicated speaks eloquently about the determination of government to connect Liberians and others within the country's borders to each other, and people of other nations through the lockbox.

He expresses government's gratitude to the Ministry and

other relevant institutions including the Finance Ministry, among others for working out a successful deal with a Liberian company that led to the revamping and building of the country's lockbox system.

Meanwhile, Deputy Minister Blamoh reveals that the government through its flagship Pro-po Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD) program, is committed to leaving no stone unturned in all sectors of development, including post and telecommunications.

For his part, Mr. Paul W. Thomas, Director General of Post says the Ministry of Post and Telecommunication is in drive to addressing the pressing challenges of timely mail delivery to its final destination.

According to him, Liberia is a member and a signatory to many international protocols, some which include the Universal Postal Union (UPU), the Pan African Postal Union (PAPU) and many others which call for a member state to be

more proactive and innovative to address challenges especially the financial marginalization of the postal sector.

Mr. Thomas further indicates that since the Liberian civil war, the country's post system has found difficulty in recovering from the ashes of the war.

He says it has experienced budgetary and financial constraints which have limited the post system's capacity to fully operate many of its services.

The Post Director General narrates that to reactivate the private postal lockboxes requires financial resources which prompted a submission of a project proposal to the Finance Ministry to seek possible private investment with the capacity to pre-finance the rehabilitation and construction of postal lock boxes at post offices, and premises across the country.--

Edited by Winston W. Parley



Deputy Minister of State for Presidential Affairs George Wesseh Blamoh

## Police honor UN, Swedish envoys

The Liberia National Police (LNP) has given special recognition to two astute personalities, Out-going Assistant Secretary General/UN Resident Coordinator in Liberia Yacoub El Hillo and Mr. Ulf M. Strahl, Project Manager of the Swedish Police Authority Bilateral Support Project.

According to an LNP press statement, the two counterparts were honored during a farewell ceremony at

the LNP Headquarters officials on Friday, 9 August for their dedicated services to support its works and other security agencies in Liberia.

Police Inspector General Col. Patrick T. Sudue has recounted the numerous contributions made by Amb. Yacoub El Hillo to the security sector of the Republic of Liberia during the era of the United Nations Mission in Liberia and after the UN draw down here.

El Hillo was one of the personalities who worked with the LNP to amicably resolve most of the protests in recent times and promised the continuous relationship between the LNP and his office.

Additionally, the Police Inspector General extends gratitude to the Swedish Police Authority Bilateral Support Project Manager, Mr. Ulf M. Strahl and acknowledged the assistance of the Swedish government towards capacity building for the LNP's forensic section that was organized by the Swedish Police Authority (SPA).

Col. Sudue explains that the SPA has also constructed comfort facilities for Police Zones 6, 8 and 10 which are intended to accommodate victims of sexual gender-based violence.

Also gracing the occasion, the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of Liberia, General Prince C. Johnson praised Mr. El Hillo for his dedicated services rendered the security Sector during and after the UNMIL draw down.

General Johnson also praised the UN through its outgoing envoy for the numerous supports to the AFL during his tenure.

## ArcelorMittal affirms

Cont'd from page 6

the ensuing period.

The is project is consistent with the company's continued commitment to the country having been operating in Liberia for over 14 years.

Scott Lowe, CEO, ArcelorMittal Liberia commented: "When I took on my role as CEO in March of this year, I committed to building on a solid foundation to create a successful business we can all be proud of. A key part of this commitment is ensuring that we continue to progress the project as required before making an investment decision. Reviewing the results of the DFS with representatives

of the Government of Liberia is a step forward towards the project that, if approved, would create additional revenue streams for the Government of Liberia and crucially, more long term skilled jobs for Liberians.

Our commitment to training the workforce of the future can be demonstrated by our \$7mln investment in the Vocational Training Centre which is a part of our contribution to help build a sustainable and highly-skilled workforce that will meet the future needs of both ArcelorMittal and Liberia."

He recalls the construction of several duty stations across the country.

In his response to the honor by the LNP Mr. El Hillo says he feels very privileged to have served the UN Mission in Liberia for the second time, especially leaving the country in a peaceful condition.

He further adds that Liberia has graduated from being a recipient of peacekeeping support to a donor of peacekeeping support.

He recounts a recent time when the political atmosphere was very charged here, adding that the situation was amicably handled without any blood share.

He prays that the people of Liberia will no more taste any

form of war, promising to come back to Liberia one day as a tourist.

For his part, Mr. Ulf M. Strahl thanks Col. Sudue for the cordial working relationship he enjoyed over the years while assigned at the LNP.

As a sign of his deep appreciation, he presented a gift to the Col. Sudue which serves as a reminder of the love and contributions of the Swedish Police to the Liberia National Police.

In further remarks, other heads of Joint Security institutions praised the outgoing UN boss and promised to work harder in protecting the peace and security of the state.--Press release



# Français

## Verdier ne fait pas de cadeau au président Weah

Le groupe de la Justice internationale (IJG) basé aux États-Unis condamne la situation actuelle au Libéria et appelle tous les acteurs de la société civile et la communauté internationale à déplorer le manque d'action et l'indécision du gouvernement dirigé par George Weah concernant les droits humains, la corruption et la violence et les questions nationales telles que la justice, le tribunal des crimes de guerre et la mise en œuvre complète du rapport de la CVR.

Le Directeur exécutif de l'IJG, Me Jerome J. Verdier, au cours d'un entretien avec un groupe de journalistes libériens aux États-Unis, a exprimé sa colère face à l'acquiescement du Sénateur Varney Sherman du comté de Grand Cape Mount, soupçonné de corruption.

Selon une dépêche en provenance de Washington, Me Verdier s'en est pris aux autorités judiciaires et au ministre d'État aux Affaires présidentielles, Nathaniel McGill, les accusant de pervertir la justice en minimisant les éléments de preuve pour acquiescer Me Varney Sherman.

« Pour y parvenir, Son Honneur le juge Nagbe s'est présenté devant le tribunal lors du verdict d'acquiescement pour manifester sa solidarité avec le stratagème en gage de loyauté », a-t-il dit.

Selon lui, le complot qui visait à blanchir Varney Sherman et Sable Mining avait été minutieusement préparé par le pouvoir, avec pour maître d'œuvre le ministre Nathaniel McGill, qui avait sollicité et incité criminellement l'aide de Me Varney Sherman pour violer l'article 73 de la Constitution du Libéria afin de faciliter la destitution du juge KabinehJa'neh par le biais d'un procès kangourou, en échange de son acquiescement de tous les chefs d'accusation dans l'affaire Sable Mining.

Me Verdier a rappelé que le juge KabinehJa'neh a été destitué pour un jugement qu'il a rendu à titre judiciaire et officiel en tant que « Président du tribunal », ce qui constitue une violation des dispositions de

l'article 73 de la Constitution libérienne de 1986.

L'article 73 de la Constitution stipule : « Aucun magistrat ne peut être convoqué, arrêté, détenu, poursuivi ou jugé civilement ou pénalement par ou à la demande d'une personne ou d'une autorité en raison d'opinions juridiques rendues ou exprimées, de déclarations judiciaires et d'actes judiciaires faits au cours d'un procès en audience publique ou en chambre, sauf pour trahison ou autre crime, délit ou violation de la paix. Les déclarations faites et les actes accomplis par ces fonctionnaires au cours d'une procédure judiciaire sont privilégiés et, sous réserve de la réserve susmentionnée, aucune déclaration ni aucun acte de cette nature ne sont recevables en preuve à leur

(LP), s'est répercuté sur le représentant du district 10 du comté de Montserrado, YekeKolubah, qui s'est plaint à plusieurs reprises de tentative d'assassinat.

« À présent, la violence et les meurtres perpétrés à la manière de gangsters ont pris une ferveur nationale, l'ordre public est en train de disparaître rapidement et un état d'anarchie et de désordre règne au Libéria et le gouvernement Weah reste silencieux, suscitant de nombreux soupçons selon lesquels le président, est sans doute derrière les actes de violence dont se rendent coupables les militants du CDC pour intimider et contraindre l'opposition à se soumettre et pour réprimer la dissidence dans le cadre de son ambition politique de devenir un dictateur au pouvoir pendant

corruption et aux droits de l'homme et son semblant de tolérer la violence est une faille qui constitue en soi un déficit de leadership ».

Il soupçonne le président d'être indécis et de démontrer un manque d'autorité et d'emprise sur ses hommes. Il croit que le président n'est pas capable de contraindre ses hommes au respect de la loi ou à agir dans les limites de la loi, comme en témoigne le refus de certains fonctionnaires de déclarer leurs biens.

L'ancien patron de la TRC accuse le président Weah de n'accorder plus de priorité qu'à sa vie sociale au mépris du bien-être des pauvres qui l'ont élu. « Le président, déficient en savoir et en expérience, s'est entouré de personnes basses, sans vision ni amour pour le pays. Par conséquence, le président et

patrimoine. Tout comme l'Assemblée législative et l'honorable Cour suprême n'ont jamais fait l'objet d'un audit, nous poursuivons les politiques de l'ancien président Sirleaf, faisant de ces vénérables organes du gouvernement des institutions nationales de corruption et de disgrâce. »

Selon lui, le président Weah a accordé un contrat de construction à son ami qui lui aurait offert en retour un avion, et aurait dissimulé toute l'information au pouvoir législatif et à la population du Libéria, quant à la nature du cadeau, comme c'est habituellement le cas. « La corruption est un délit imprescriptible contre l'intégrité de l'État », a-t-il ajouté.

A Me Verdier de dire en outre que le président a personnellement veillé au détournement criminel des 25 millions de dollars américains destinés à une opération visant à éponger l'excès de liquidité en circulation de la monnaie locale sur le marché libérien. « Cependant, avec l'accord explicite du président, l'argent a été détourné pour un usage privé et non public, et un marché parallèle en devises a été créé pour échanger les billets libériens manquants avec les billets américains, limitant ainsi les manipulations du taux de change et les délits d'initiation, blanchiment d'argent, détournement de fonds, détournement de biens confiés, vol de biens et fraude ».

« Le président a directement supervisé le vol d'argent public pour des raisons personnelles mais sans rendre de comptes. Le président a retiré 80 millions de dollars des réserves internationales libériennes à New York. Sur ce montant, on ne peut rendre compte que de 55 millions à la Banque centrale. Le reste des 25 millions de dollars américains ont été transférés de l'aéroport à la résidence du président à Rehab. Cet acte délibéré et flagrant de vol commis par le président est une transgression criminelle qui le rend inapte à la confiance du public et à la fonction qu'il occupe », conclut l'avocat libérien qui réside actuellement aux États-Unis.



encontre lors d'un procès ou d'une procédure. »

Il condamne le recours de la violence dans l'espace politique. Il estime que l'escalade euphorique de la violence, de la brutalité et du non-respect de la loi, qui menace l'espace démocratique et constitue ce fait une menace majeure pour les aspirations démocratiques du pays, sous le régime du président Weah est aussi cruelle que la violence dont a été témoin le pays au temps de la dictature du président Samuel Doe.

Selon lui, ce qui a commencé comme un événement isolé entre le député Yongblee Karngar Lawrence, du comté de Grand Bassa, et le parti de l'opposition, le Liberty Party

27 ans ou plus, dépassant ainsi le président William VS Tubman. Le Libéria est une kleptocratie, nous le savons bien, mais les tendances écrasantes en matière de criminalité, d'impunité, d'autocratie, de mépris pour les droits de l'homme et les principes élémentaires de la bonne gouvernance sont des signes inquiétants qui, si des mesures correctives ne sont pas prises pour inverser cette tendance, feront du Libéria un État paria qu'il était autrefois... », a mis en garde l'ancien président de la Commission vérité et réconciliation du Libéria.

« Cependant », dit-il, « bien qu'il soit vrai que tous les problèmes du Libéria ne sont pas imputables au président Weah, son attitude nonchalante face à la

son équipe n'ont adopté aucune approche politique viable pour résoudre les problèmes auxquels le pays est confronté, car ils n'ont aucun plan pour redresser l'économie, stimuler le développement national et la réconciliation nationale ».

« À ce jour, le président et son équipe n'ont pas compris ni appréhendé les exigences gigantesques relatives à la création du tribunal des crimes de guerre dans le cadre de la mise en œuvre intégrale du rapport de la TRC et de la résolution 1055 adoptée par le congrès américain.

Le président ne dit rien sur les questions de responsabilité et de corruption. Ni M. le Président ni ses collaborateurs n'ont été audités. Ils n'ont pas respecté les exigences de la loi en matière de déclaration de

# Français

## Didier Drogba, Président De La Fif ? L'ancien Footballeur Sort Du Silence !

L'ex international ivoirien Didier Drogba a annoncé se porter candidat à la présidence de la Fédération Ivoirienne de Football, « si toutes les conditions sont réunies », à l'occasion d'un entretien accordé à l'émission Radio Foot Internationale, le vendredi 9 août 2019.

« C'est quelque chose qui pourrait m'intéresser, car je connais bien le football ivoirien », a déclaré l'ancien joueur de Chelsea estimant qu'il a « été en équipe nationale pendant plusieurs

situation du football en Côte d'Ivoire et en Afrique. « Il faut aider les clubs et les centres de formation à se développer et à se structurer comme en Europe ou en Amérique du Sud », a pensé l'ancien champion d'Europe, expliquant qu'il a « pu voir ce qui était positif et ce qui l'était moins ». Un peu contesté par les ivoiriens, Augustin Sidy Diallo est l'actuel président de la Fédération Ivoirienne de Football. Par ailleurs l'élection du prochain



années » avant de dire « si toutes les conditions sont réunies, pourquoi pas ».

« Nous avons vécu de belles années avec la génération précédente (titre de champion d'Afrique en 2015 en Guinée équatoriale). Maintenant, même si nous avons de bons joueurs, il va falloir franchir un cap », a lancé l'ancien joueur des blues de Chelsea. Dans cet entretien, l'ex footballeur de 41 ans a posé un regard sur la

président de la Fif est prévue en fin d'année 2019.

« Si jamais je décide de me lancer et de me porter candidat, je ne viendrais pas pour prendre parti pour l'un ou pour l'autre, mais pour rassembler », a précisé Didier Drogba concluant qu'il « faut oublier les querelles personnelles, penser au pays et faire avancer le football ivoirien ».

## IYAD AG GHALY, À L'AGONIE !

Après la raclée de Cheikh Ag Aoussa face aux troupes de la Plateforme la semaine dernière à Kidal, le ciel semble encore s'éclaircir davantage pour l'avenir du Nord Mali avec ce coup de pouce du destin : Iyad Ag Ghaly ne sera bientôt plus de ce monde !

Iyad Ag Ghaly, le pire ennemi du Mali et des touaregs ne va pas bien, pas bien du tout même. Pour dire la vérité, il serait en train de mourir, seul, dans son trou à rat à la frontière algérienne.

Sa santé, chancelante depuis quelque temps, s'est soudain fortement dégradée.

Ceux qui voudraient le voir une dernière fois doivent se dépêcher et courir vers sa tanière car demain, peut-être, il sera trop tard ! D'autant que la minable défaite de son compère Cheikh Ag Aoussa,

devrait finir de l'achever !

La vie d'Iyad Ag Ghaly aura été une succession de crimes et d'abominations, de sang et de larmes : des civils déshabillés sur ses mines, des soldats massacrés et éventrés à Aguelhok sur ses ordres, un peuple touareg jeté dans la misère, des trafics, des mensonges et des trahisons.

Une liste d'exactions et d'horreurs qui file la nausée !

Iyad Ag Ghaly aura finalement eu de la chance. Réduit à l'état de cadavre, il n'aura jamais à rendre compte de ses crimes devant la justice.

Quoi qu'il en soit, la confirmation de sa mort, sera une sacrée bonne nouvelle pour le Mali. Elle provoquera à coup sûr la débandade de tous ses lieutenants, et l'effondrement de son mouvement terroriste. Le plus tôt sera le mieux !

## COMMENTAIRE

Par Mohamed A. El-Erian

## Les tensions commerciales, symptôme d'un malaise plus profond

NEW-YORK - Les tensions croissantes entre la Chine et les USA pourraient inciter de plus en plus d'économistes à avertir du risque de récession mondiale couplée à des soubresauts financiers. Le 5 août, le site Bloomberg.com annonçait qu'un indicateur très surveillé, la courbe des taux d'intérêt, "lance une alerte à la récession aux USA, comme jamais depuis 2007". Et Larry Summers, ancien secrétaire d'Etat au Trésor très impliqué dans la gestion de la crise financière en 2008-2009, a déclaré récemment dans un Tweet que "nous sommes peut-être au moment financier le plus dangereux... depuis 2009.

Pour beaucoup d'économistes, la résolution des tensions sino-américaines est sans doute le meilleur moyen d'éviter une crise économique et financière mondiale. Mais même si cela est nécessaire, c'est loin d'être suffisant.

Comprenez-moi bien, l'attention portée à la détérioration des relations sino-américaines est parfaitement compréhensible : l'aggravation des tensions augmente le risque d'une guerre commerciale couplée à une guerre des devises, conduisant à des politiques protectionnistes perdant-perdant qui feraient tache d'huile dans toute l'économie mondiale. Les perspectives de croissance s'assombrissent, les problèmes d'endettement deviendraient prééminents dans certains pays, car ils ajouteraient l'instabilité financière à une situation économique difficile. Le conflit USA-Chine s'étend maintenant au-delà de l'économie pour inclure les questions de sécurité nationale et de politique intérieure ; aussi le meilleur scénario envisageable sur le plan commercial pourrait-il être une série de cessez-le-feu, mais le plus probable est une intensification des tensions.

Pourtant vu dans un contexte plus large, celui des 10 dernières années, les tensions commerciales apparaissent comme le symptôme plutôt que la cause du malaise économique et financier mondial. Or, à trop se focaliser sur le commerce, les responsables politiques risquent de négliger les mesures nécessaires pour assurer une croissance plus rapide et plus inclusive dans un environnement financier stable.

Ils sont aussi aux prises avec les pressions politiques croissantes qui s'exercent sur les banques centrales, la réaction contre le tiers des inégalités (les inégalités de revenu, de patrimoine et d'opportunités), la politique de la colère, la montée des mouvements anti-establishment, la perte de confiance dans l'opinion des dirigeants et des experts, les tensions économiques et géopolitiques régionales, le risque croissant d'instabilité financière, les menaces qui pèsent sur les produits de protection financière à long terme et un sentiment général d'insécurité économique.

Ainsi que je l'écris dans mon livre, *The Only Game in Town*, tous ces événements récents ainsi que les tensions sino-américaines, sont clairement liés à deux caractéristiques persistantes de l'économie mondiale depuis la crise de 2008 :

1) La période prolongée de croissance non seulement trop faible, mais aussi insuffisamment inclusive. De ce fait, une partie croissante de la population se sent marginalisée et dépossédée. Elle est en colère, d'où des résultats électoraux inattendus, la montée des mouvements

populistes et nationalistes et dans certains cas des troubles sociaux.

2) Le recours excessif à l'injection de liquidités par les banques centrales. C'est un remède anesthésiant, mais dangereux ; il serait préférable d'adopter une combinaison de mesures monétaires et budgétaires plus équilibrée afin de diminuer les obstacles (essentiellement structureaux, mais aussi cycliques) à une croissance plus rapide et plus inclusive. La politique monétaire n'a pas permis de relancer véritablement une croissance durable, mais elle a conduit à une hausse significative du prix des actifs. Cela a renforcé les protestations contre un système accusé de privilégier les riches plutôt que d'être au service de l'intérêt général - pour ne pas parler des groupes les plus désavantagés.

Si ces deux caractéristiques perdurent, l'économie mondiale va rapidement se trouver en position inconfortable. Hypothèse optimiste, le système actuel va finir par répondre à la pression populaire et le chemin actuel, de plus en plus incertain, pourrait déboucher sur la reprise d'une croissance inclusive et une réelle stabilité financière. Mais on ne peut exclure une autre issue : des récessions, l'instabilité financière et une flambée de tensions politiques et sociales.

La situation actuelle est de plus en plus imprévisible. En particulier, le recours incessant à des mesures monétaires non orthodoxes comporte des coûts et des risques croissants. Il s'agit notamment des attaques contre l'autonomie des banques centrales, le découplage excessif du prix des actifs par rapport aux fondamentaux économiques sous-jacents et la promesse systémique excessive de liquidités en bout de chaîne (en particulier hors du secteur bancaire). Aujourd'hui, une erreur politique ou un accident des marchés pourrait rendre rapidement la situation chaotique.

Pour éviter un désastre économique et système financier mondial, la Chine et les USA doivent résoudre leurs désaccords dans un cadre bien plus large qui inclut d'autres puissances économiques, notamment l'Europe.

La revitalisation des échanges commerciaux visant à les rendre plus ouverts et plus équitables devrait commencer par la prise en compte des griefs exprimés par les USA et l'Europe à l'égard de la Chine. Ils concernent la propriété intellectuelle, le transfert forcé de technologie, les subventions excessives et d'autres pratiques peu équitables en matière de commerce et d'investissements. Cela pourrait servir de base à une politique multilatérale d'envergure pour supprimer les obstacles à la croissance réelle et potentielle.

Une telle politique inclurait aussi une rénovation des infrastructures européennes et américaines, des politiques budgétaires plus équilibrées en Europe, une meilleure architecture économique régionale, une meilleure protection sociale à travers le monde et des mesures ciblées de libéralisation et de dérégulation en Chine et en Europe.

Avec une politique concertée de cette nature, l'économie mondiale pourrait évoluer favorablement. Mais en son absence, l'insécurité et l'instabilité économique et financière dont on se plaint aujourd'hui ne sont rien en comparaison de ce qui pourrait suivre.

# Speech Delivered at the Press Union of Liberia Awards Ceremony

## Salutations

Mr. President of the Press Union of Liberia

The Leadership of the PUL

Award beneficiaries

Members of the 4<sup>th</sup> Estate

The Minister of Information

Deputies of the MOF

The leadership and members of the National Legislature

Officials of Government

Political leaders and members of the Opposition

Distinguished Dignitaries of Foreign governments near this capital

Very important guests in attendance at this auspicious occasion

Ladies and Gentlemen

## The Media and Economic Development

How the media *says what it says* influences outcomes during and after elections, no wonder the media the conscience of democratic societies. The full and complete government control of the media in 19<sup>th</sup> century Liberia ended in the 21<sup>st</sup> century when private media ownership was encouraged and promoted. It was hoped that the multiplicity of media institutions would enable good governance and better fiscal policy outcomes; sadly the reverse is **true** today. In some countries, how the media –said what it said – exposed nations to prolonged crisis; massive loss of human lives and untold suffering. Prosperous democracies with better performing economies around the world result from a *medi* that is truly the 4<sup>th</sup> branch of government but a branch that is very sensitive to the plight of the people; lifting issues of

- 1) Relevance to the social economic wellbeing of the people
- 2) Enabling alternative voices with clear governance alternatives and
- 3) Ignoring irrelevant comments and contributions that does not lift the people's agenda of poverty eradication; job creation, educational advancement and improved health delivery.

After the massive misrule of Madam Sirleaf that left 40% of logging forests depleted, most mineral wealth committed, an estimated \$1 billion indebtedness, huge unemployment, an expanded public service with an estimated 15 new public institutions and enlarged public workforce; rising inflation, a devalued Liberian Dollars and a country reliant on imported basic commodities; poor educational institutions, a dying health system and high infant mortality rate. One would have thought such conditional prevalence would greatly mobilized the media during the 2017 elections to elevate voices with clear approaches to better governance; rather, Political parties were deemed relevant, **not by the capacity of their standard bearers** or the governing vision espoused; but by the size of their national offices, the quantity of vehicles and the amount of cash available to be spent or monies spent. Senior media practitioners swayed public perception with their own *misunderstanding* of an electioneering period, not as a period of sober examination of candidates and their visions but the focus on intangibles and aspects totally irrelevant to an election. So bad was the situation that an unknown and probably unregistered group – deepening democracy – outrageously selected 7 out of 20 candidates, as the preferred and most significant candidates, an unheard of practice in any democracy. Eventually, some of those left out obtained more votes to those preferred by the group. After these very critical elections, the methodologies used enabled the outcomes currently enjoyed.

During elections, when a candidate's relevance *is not* vision, understanding of current national economic challenges, profession of workable solutions and personal capacity to lead **but** size of party office, number of cars and amount of spendable resources then like George Orwell said "A people who elect corrupt politicians, imposters, thieves and traitors are not victims but **accomplices**".

Liberia has become a vicious circle. A poor election yardstick enables the wrong state actors. The misgoverning of the wrong state actors makes talkers relevant. Their popularity is driven purely by their ability to criticise the misdeeds of the wrong state actors. Such popularity leads to the election of another cabal of poorly equip state actors that drive us deeper into poverty and hopelessness. There are other groups of journalists who erroneously believe not taking the right position during elections validates their neutrality. When we pretend to be neutral during critical national dialogue or about issues that determine our national wellbeing then Plato was right when he said "One of the penalties for refusing to participate in politics is that you end up being governed by your inferiors".

Today, media institutions are walking dead. Newspapers that once sold 800 to 2500 copies are selling 250 to 1200 copies. Radio and television stations are barely surviving. So it is apparent that a bad economy hits journalists and their families too; journalists whose voices and pens are used to set poor election criteria that enable poor leadership. This realization must awaken a new dynamism in the Liberian media landscape. A time for national elections is not just a time to sell airtime but a time for concrete analysis for the national good.

My brothers and sisters in arms – the power of your voices and pens can influence electoral outcomes; outcomes that can ultimately influence national development.

## The Governors and the governed

Those who muster the *courage and strength* to criticise or challenge approaches to national development are **not enemies of the state**. They endorse and support national development but disagree with the approaches to national development. A strong opposition is an asset to national development. They enable a *priceless view* for the leader. Their advocacy lifts issues of relevance for public policy makers. It is said by a Liberian singer "power makes one heavy" and such heaviness attract sycophants, who deploy vices to enjoy the prolonged confidence of the President. They say, leadership is lonely but that is only true when we choose to entertain sycophants and create no room for alternative views; when we distance alternative voices because they disagree with our approaches; spoke to or about us in ways we or our lieutenants deemed inappropriate, when the views we permit are the ones we like to hear; or we isolate people because they wear a different perception. *However*, when the leader encourages groups –*for* and *against* – approaches to national development to debate their positions in his presence, he mobilizes the tools needed for sound decision making and eliminates the loneliness that comes with decision making. It would be a good thing should the President's cabinet develop a plan and invite relevant stakeholders – opposition or otherwise – to present an alternative paper at a meeting of his cabinet. Such exchanges bridge the gaps in public policy weaknesses that enable prolonged poverty and deprivation.

The current trends, borrowed from the past, are unsustainable. The rewards for mustering the courage to speak truth to power are insults, brutalization, stoned and jeered by hoodlums and or exile of oneself or one's family. Insult begets insult and violence begets violence. A society burdened by poverty and hopelessness will self-destruct when violence begets violence or insult begets insult.

To all the advocates, politicians, agitators and voices of the voiceless, I salute you for your courage to risk your personal wellbeing, access to opportunities and special privileges for the good of Liberia. As a strong political advocate myself, I share your pains and know your struggles. My fellow comrades, I have a bone to pick with you. Insulting a sitting public officials and encouraging our



followers to do the same is not healthy for our democracy. Our children are listening to the radio and TV. They are on Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat. We must take responsibility for what we say. Profanity in public places must be discouraged. We have a responsibility to sanitize the airwaves; though sometimes, speaking from experience, reaction to our well intentioned action is so bad that we feel pressured to lose our cool. Let our criticisms be alternative ideas to national developmental approaches. When insulted, we must focus on the alternative ideas and not the insults. We must restrain our anger lest we create, nurture and brew a society that thrives on insulting public officials. We may just be erroneously creating a demon.

## Liberia's Development Agenda

The challenges of our country are real. The nagging question of – how do we equitably distribute wealth with an enhanced governance structure remains unanswered. The 1980 coup only changed the leadership but not the system of governance. Few natives assume a governance system, imbued with large government, 90% of collected revenue spent on the bureaucracy and payment of lip service to development goals.

We have long surpassed the annual 2012 estimated 50,000 jobs to have been created **and** this is further compounded by **technology**; which is enabling and creating mass urban migration faster than the rate of public policy movement. Despite the chronic infrastructural challenges, Liberians are more technologically interconnected than they were years ago. This connectedness enables easy visualization of locations and visualization aids mass urban migration. As the workforce migrates to cities, it depletes much needed rural workforce and erodes urban infrastructure faster than their projected lifespan.

The Weah government inherited a very troubling scorecard containing large government, rising inflation, disorderly economic fundamentals, huge trade deficit, largely depleted forests; hugely committed mining resources with high infant mortality, bad health and educational systems; *however*, the reason for the change of government was not to dwell on the past but to forge a new path forward.

Today, the scorecard is worse off than was inherited. Access to foreign exchange is an unaffordable luxury; small businesses are folding up in droves. The economy is in free fall, battling rising double digit inflation and *taking* with it, the available domestic purchasing power. **The fundamentals of our economy are totally out of order.** Our educational system is screaming for assistance while our **Health** facilities are dead. Health workers tell me, they are available to work but nothing to work with.

We have two choices.

- 1) **Criticize the current state of affairs or**
- 2) **Engage the current administration to change the current state of affairs**

I prefer the latter. Criticism may attack their egos and compelled the hardening of their position that will ultimately maintain depravation for all.

The past administration had two national development agendas:

- 1) The Poverty Reduction Strategy
- 2) Vision 2030

Though the both plans lack substance and relevance but we have **not** seen this government's **development plan**. It may exist but not widely available locally. Howbeit, we have seen the construction of urban community roads; market buildings, increment in the wage bill and workforce. If these are the critical priority areas for the government, then we urge the government, not away from their plans, but to consider the addition of key priority areas that constitute the core challenges confronting the nation. The huge number of public institutions, wage bill, government's asset policy; special/general allowances and our overall approach to development require urgent radical attention to identify much needed developmental resources.

## Large Public Institutions

A manual count of public institutions exceeds 88 for about 5 million people. This requires the urgent attention of policy makers. The concept of a very large government has **never** worked and will **never** work. The actual work at a public institution with about 300 to 600 employees is done by about 15 to 30 persons or less. For example, the total allotment to the Ministry of Information, Culture Affairs and Tourism under the 2018/19 budget was USD\$1.756 million dollars while USD\$2.08 million has been allocated for 2019/2020. Should the MOI be merged with the office of the Press Secretary to the President to form a new office to be called – Liberia Information Services – and situated under the office of the President with not more than 15 employees, we would have saved USD\$1.461 million annually. The basic salary for the current MOI workforce is USD\$618,327. We can pay all MOI employees their basic salary and invest the USD\$1.461 million annually in critically needed manufacturing sector. By reviewing the size of our bureaucracy, savings of more than USD\$200 million dollars annually is possible. We could go on celebrating the Gender Ministries of our time and several other bureaucratic institutions that add only dead weight to us. If we are serious about national development and equitable wealth distribution, an urgent review of the size of our bureaucracy is required.

## Approaches

Over the years, large sums of monies are paid to private institutions, be it health or educational, as government subsidy. What are the goals behind such subsidies? What outcomes have been realized from the subsidies awarded to private institutions?

In the 2018/19 budget, we allocated for the Phebe Hospital in Bong County, privately owned but one of the largest referral hospitals in Central Liberia, USD\$1.79 million with a 2019/20 allocation of USD\$1.592 million dollars. What is the money used for? I am not standing against national allocations but to enable and enhance development, such money must target specific outcomes thereby enabling a measurable achievement year on year.

The National Social Security and Welfare Corporation should invest in low cost housing for workers however in recent years; it has invested in luxury properties, leaving the true beneficiaries of collected pensions victims of the housing crisis in an overpopulated city. Urgent attention must be lent by policy makers to how the Social Security invests its resources. In other countries, legislations have been passed to invest Social Security resources in low cost housing through locally owned banks. Should we drive similar policy efforts, the housing deficit and poor zoning overtaking Liberia could be greatly alleviated. Liberia's working class and government employees could populate newly built low cost houses; while new premiums used as instalment payments to defray the outstanding cost of ownership.

If we are serious about poverty eradication, the opportunity presents itself so clearly. The sectors we must target are openly available. How much money does the National Port Authority or Liberia Petroleum Refinery Corporation contribute to the national treasury annually? Is it time to privatize them and let them pay taxes to the people of Liberia? My fellow stakeholders in the media, I encourage you to talk about these issues to get policy makers to critically consider the drastic changes required to drive our country forward.

## Education

By 1961; the total national budget was USD\$8,730,200; of this amount, USD\$2,250,000 was allocated to the educational sector or about 26%. Similarly, 21% or USD\$1.8 million was spent on health and related services. Today, out of the total anticipated budget of USD\$532,907 million dollars, only about 15.6% or USD\$83 million spent on Education. Similarly, 14.2% or USD\$75 million spent on the health sector. Were our forefathers more serious about social services than we are today?

**TO BE CONT'D**

# Critical voices are not enemies

Long-silence businessman-turned politician Simeon Freeman damns the governing Coalition-led government of President George Manneh Weah for its poor handling of the affairs of state.

Serving as guest speaker at the Press Union of Liberia (PUL) Excellence Awards Night and Dinner Friday, 9 August in the Paynesville City Hall outside Monrovia, Mr. Freeman, political leader of the opposition Movement for Progress Change (MPC) warns against constant labeling of Liberians who muster the courage and strength to criticize or challenge approaches to national development as 'enemies of state', terming such characterization as 'detrimental' to the advancement of socioeconomic and development agenda of the Country.

President George Manneh Weah some of his officials graced the ceremony annually held by the umbrella organization of the media in Liberia.

He argues that Liberians with such critical voices are not enemies of the state, adding, "They endorse and



support national development but disagree with the approaches..."

He stresses that a strong opposition is an asset to national development, which embodied and enable a priceless view for the leader.

"Their advocacy lifts issues of relevance for public policymakers. It is said by a Liberian singer "power makes one heavy" and such heaviness attract sycophants, who deploy vices to enjoy the prolonged confidence of the President", he asserts.

The MPC leader notes that leadership is lonely but that is only true when one chooses to entertain sycophants and create no room for alternative views by distancing from such voices "because they disagree with our approaches; spoke to or about us in ways we or our lieutenants deemed inappropriate, when the views we permit are the ones we like to hear; or we isolate people because they wear a different perception."

He continues that however, when the leader encourages

groups - for and against - approaches to national development to debate their positions in his presence, he mobilizes the tools needed for sound decision making and eliminates the loneliness that comes with decision making, underscoring that it would be a good thing should the President's cabinet develop a plan and invite relevant stakeholders - opposition or otherwise - to present an alternative paper at a meeting of his cabinet saying, "Such exchanges bridge the gaps in public policy weaknesses that enable prolonged poverty and deprivation."

The CEO of Consolidated Group, dealer of digital television (Dstv) in Monrovia also criticizes the government under the stewardship of President George M. Weah, for following the path of its predecessors, which are not sustainable.

"The current trends, borrowed from the past, are unsustainable. The rewards for mustering the courage to speak truth to power are insults, brutalization, stoned and jeered by hoodlums and or exile of oneself or one's family. Insult begets insult and violence begets violence;

A society burdened by poverty and hopelessness will self-destruct when violence begets violence or insult begets insult", he cautions.

He applauds advocates, politicians, agitators and those he calls voices of the voiceless, for their courage in risking your personal wellbeing, access to opportunities and special

privileges for the good of Liberia. "As a strong political advocate myself, I share your pains and know your struggles."

An outspoken critic of the former Sirleaf administration, Mr. Freeman has kept silent since he lost the presidency in 2017 along with dozens of other political parties to Mr. Weah's Coalition for Democratic Change.

He decries the wave of disrespect for elected or public officials by some Liberians, behaviors he notes, are counterproductive to sustaining a healthy democratic environment.

He says the trend of reporting and broadcast, post on various social media, especially the use of profanity is a challenge that needs to be dealt with.

"We have a responsibility to sanitize the airwaves; though sometimes, speaking from experience, reaction to our well-intentioned action is so bad that we feel pressured to lose our cool. Let our criticisms be alternative ideas to national developmental approaches. When insulted, we must focus on alternative ideas and not insults. We must restrain our anger least we create, nurture and brew a society that thrives on insulting public officials. We may just be erroneously creating a demon", he cautions media practitioners.

At the ceremony, several journalists and media institutions received awards in various categories for excellence. **-Editing by Jonathan Browne**

## Mass arrest in Paynesville

The Liberia National Police (LNP) says it has arrested 12 individuals, charged and sent them to court following a riot in Redlight, Paynesville on 4 August in revenge for the killing of private security Flomo Johnson by substance abusers called Zogoes.

On Sunday, 4 August at 0945hrs, police say a group of angry crowd went after some Zogoes with deadly instruments believed to be sticks, and rocks in avenging the stabbing to death of victim Johnson, a resident of Johnsonville in the Pipeline Community.

Police say they have investigated, charged and sent to court several individuals linked to the mob violence that occurred Sunday, August 4, 2019 in Paynesville.

Those arrested include: Semion Ben, (20); Emmanuel Bore, (25); Ruth Zammie, (16); Jomah Diallo (29); Isaiah Sayo, (19); Junior Davies, (17); and Sayma Smith, (22).

Others include Ishmael Johnson, (22); Manon Supu, (28); J. Fatuma Folley, (22); Mulbah Jomah, (18) and Perry Domah, (30).

Following the incident in Redlight, police say they immediately intervened and restored calm in the area, despite the mob action on the part of

the mob actors which left several areas vandalized.

According to police, suspect Mayango Kollie, a resident of Wood Camp, Paynesville has been arrested, and efforts are also being made to arrest a man only identified as Gee Money, a resident of West Point, who are said to be prime suspects linked to the commission of the act.

These individuals were charged with multiple crimes including rioting, arson, criminal mischief and aggravated assault in violation of Chapter 17, Section 17.1, Chapter 15, Section 15.1 and 15.5 and Subchapter B, Section 14.20 respectively of the new Penal Code of Liberia.

In another development, police say there was no foul play in the deaths of Evon Yatta Kamara at the Palm Spring Resort in June and the late Fayiah Kettor who allegedly left hospital bed at the Liberia Agriculture Company (LAC) and found dead in an abolished rubber tapping bush early this year.

Briefing the public on the two autopsy reports Friday, 9 August at the Police Headquarters, Police Spokesman Moses Carter indicated that the two autopsies were carried out by two specialized and trained Liberian Pathologists, Drs. Zoebon B. Kparteh and Benedict B. Kolee.

As to the case of the late Evon Yatta Kamara, Carter explains that on 6 June 2019 at about 6:00hrs, a Sierra Leonean female was discovered lying unconscious at the Palm Spring Resort in one of the rooms with number #308.

According Spokesman Carter, police preliminary investigative report established that there was a need for an autopsy to be conducted on the body to determine the cause of death.

On 3 July at 1:20 PM, Carter says Drs. Zoebon B. Kparteh and Benedict B. Kolee carried

out a post Mortem examination of the deceased at the John F. Kennedy Memorial Hospital in the presence of representatives from the Ministry of Gender, Children & Social Protection, the Liberia National Police, Coroner officers and the Women in Peace Building Network (WIPNET).

The outcome of the Post Mortem examination conducted on the body of the Sierra Leonean national, Evon Yatta Kamara shows that she died naturally as a result of a sudden Cardiac Arrest, the police say.

Additionally, the police report that on 22 March, the late Fayiah Kettor was taken to the Liberia Agriculture Company Hospital after complaining of vomiting, loss of appetite and generalized body trembling and was diagnosed of malaria.

On 24 March at 5:00PM, the police say victim Kettor "talked to himself and later left the hospital in an attempt to attend Church but reported missing at 7: 00PM the same day."

Police reveal that on 30 March, the deceased's lifeless body was found in an abolished rubber tapping bush nearer the Hospital Camp.

The Ministry of Justice immediately called for the conduct of an autopsy to establish cause of death as to whether there was foul play or not.

On April 3, 2019 at 1400hrs PM, Drs. Zoebon B. Kparteh and Benedict B. Kolee were invited to carry out the post Mortem examination at the Abraham Roberts Funeral.

The examination was conducted in the presence of the brother of the deceased, Edwin Kettor, Henry K. Fayiah, family member, a local group, CHT-

Bassa, C. Kobo Sirminelee and the President of a local group, WSDYD, Stephen Z. Garway, Jr.

Again, the police indicate that the outcome of the report revealed that the deceased, Fayiah Kettor died as a result of Progressive Primary Miliary Pulmonary Tuberculosis and that there was no foul play.

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## Lukaku nets four in pre-season Inter debut



Only three days after completing his big-money move from Old Trafford, the Belgian scored half of his new side's goals in an 8-0 stroll

Romelu Lukaku marked his first appearance in an Inter shirt by scoring four times in his new side's emphatic win against Virtus Bergamo.

The Belgium international completed his protracted move from Manchester United on Thursday in a reported €80 million

(£74m/\$90m) deal, ending weeks of speculation.

He did not feature at all for United during their pre-season campaign, and spent some time training back in his native Belgium with Anderlecht as he sought match fitness.

The forward wasn't ready for Saturday's friendly trip to Valencia, left out of Antonio Conte's matchday squad entirely for a game which Inter eventually won on penalties after a 1-1 draw.

However, he was part of a

much-changed side that took to the field for a low-intensity encounter against Serie D minnows Bergamo on Sunday.

Handed the number nine jersey, previously worn by Mauro Icardi, Lukaku made a good first impression as he netted half of Inter's goals in an 8-0 thrashing.

Matias Vecino and Sebastiano Esposito, two other players in need of minutes, scored braces to complete the rout.

Lukaku will have been relieved to finally see his name back on the scoresheet, with his final goals in a Manchester United shirt coming against Southampton more than five months ago.

He will hope to have impressed sufficiently to merit a starting berth for Inter's first game of the Serie A season, as they host newly-promoted Lecce at San Siro on August 26.

They then look forward to fixtures with Cagliari and Udinese, before the first Milan derby of the new campaign on September 21.

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## Jose Mourinho: Frank Lampard faces less pressure

Jose Mourinho believes that Frank Lampard is under less pressure to succeed at Chelsea than his predecessors due to the impact that Fifa's transfer ban has had on the club.

Lampard takes charge of Chelsea for the first time in a competitive fixture on Sunday afternoon as the Blues face Manchester United at Old Trafford in their Premier League opener.

Chelsea were unable to add to their squad this



summer due to Fifa imposing a transfer ban on the club regarding their signing of foreign under-18 players.

Chelsea appealed Fifa's punishment, but their appeal was rejected - and the Blues will have to wait until January 2020 to add to their squad.

Christian Pulisic joined Chelsea from Borussia Dortmund this summer, though that deal had already been confirmed in January.

With Eden Hazard and David Luiz departing for Real Madrid

and Arsenal respectively, Lampard - who returned to Stamford Bridge as manager this summer - looks set to put his trust in a number of the club's promising youth players.

For that reason, Mourinho - who has been sacked twice by Chelsea - does not expect his former player to face the same pressures as several of his predecessors.

"In this moment, with the transfer ban, that releases the pressure," he told Sky Sports in his new role as a pundit.

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