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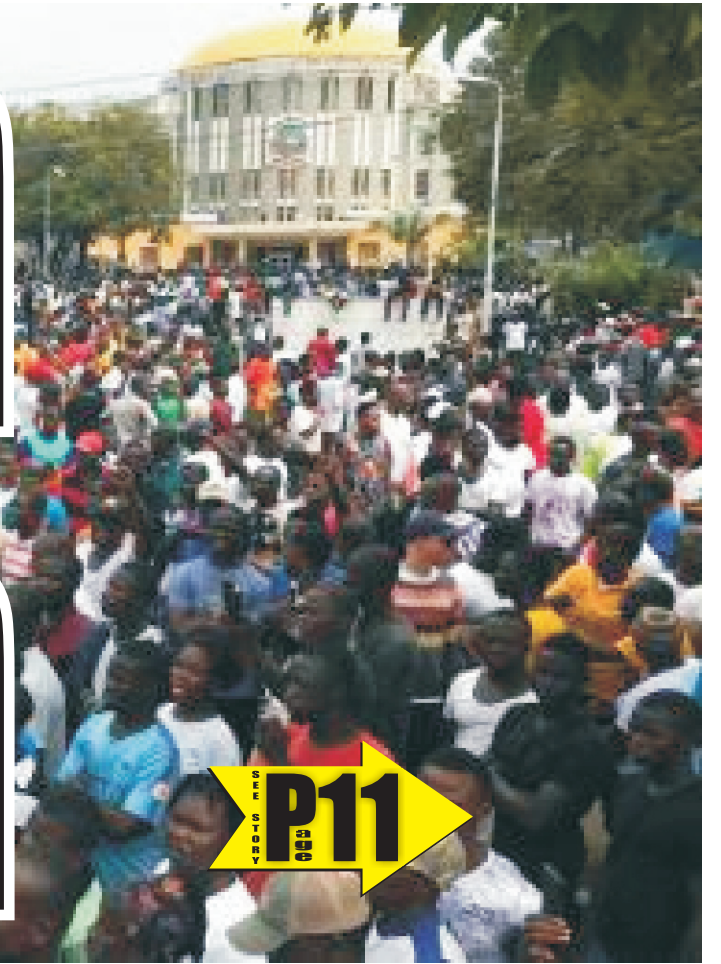
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'Step down' campaign gains momentum



Pres. Weah

Weah reacts to criticisms

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Continental News

The dilemma of how to appease Mugabe's spirit

In our series of letters from African writers, journalist-turned-barrister Brian Hungwe writes that many Zimbabweans have been shocked to learn that ex-President Robert Mugabe's widow had been staying with his body at home ahead of his burial at his rural home later on Saturday.

How do you eat, sleep and drink with a corpse in your house for weeks?

That question has been puzzling many Zimbabweans since it emerged that the body of former President Robert Mugabe - who died more than three weeks ago (on 6 September) at the age of 95 - is being kept inside his opulent Blue Roof mansion in the capital, Harare, amidst friction between the government and his family over whether he should be buried in a shrine at Heroes Acre or in his home region of Zvimba, north-west Harare. With no official announcement of where his body was, some Zimbabweans thought it was being kept in a mortuary

while others went as far as to speculate that Mugabe - as the heir to the chieftainship of Zvimba, his rural home - had already been buried in a cave in accordance with the rituals of his Gushungo clan, following his state funeral in Harare and the mourning and body-viewing in Zvimba.

But photos of Mugabe's casket at his mansion emerged on Monday (23 September)

when South Africa's firebrand opposition politician Julius Malema came to pay his respects to Grace Mugabe, the former first lady whose ambitions to succeed him as president were thwarted when her husband was forced out of office in 2017 by the military. "Mr Mugabe was sleeping easy... just resting peacefully. He is resting," Mrs Mugabe said, during Mr

Malema's visit.

This was followed by the viewing of the body, and a sumptuous lunch of pie and vegetables across the room from the corpse.

Some Zimbabweans are now drawing comparisons with rituals in Indonesia's Tana Toraja region, where it takes a long time to bury the dead.

The corpse is kept in the house. The bereaved wash and clean it.

They bring it food twice a day, as well as coffee and even cigarettes.

It is a way for the living to deal with grief. People believe the dead can hear them, and if they do not take care of the dead, the spirit - hovering above their heads - will haunt them.

Traditional beliefs among the Shona ethnic group - under which the Gushungo clan falls - also requires many rituals to be performed when death occurs.

These rituals reinforce a collective identity, and help families and communities to come to terms with the loss of a loved one. BBC



Robert Mugabe apparently wanted his widow, Grace to stay with his body until he was buried

US air strike killed Somali farmers

Rights body Amnesty International says its investigation has found that a US air strike in Somalia in March killed civilians and not militants as the US Africa Command (Africom) alleged at the time.

It says the US failed to investigate claims that the three victims were farmers and had no ties with Islamist militant group al-Shabab.

The three men were returning from their farms to their homes in Mogadishu and Leego and Yaaq Bariwayne in

Africom said in March that its assessment had determined that the air strike had "killed three terrorists" and it was aware of reports of civilian casualties.

Africom spokesman John Manley told news agency AFP that the "US Africa Command arrived at reasonable certainty the vehicle and its occupants were al-Shabab and actively supporting al-Shabab operational activity". "US Africa Command minimises the risk to civilians by following a thorough,

Fire destroys 70ha in Kenya's Aberdare Forest

A raging fire has destroyed more than 70 hectares (approximately 173 acres) of bamboo in the Aberdare Forest even as Kenya Wildlife Service battles to put it out. According to KWS Mt Kenya boss Mr Bajila Kofa, the flames are suspected to have been started by illegal honey

harvesters or poachers on Sunday. "The fire started at around 6pm on Sunday, it was a fierce fire. We sent 45 KWS officers to battle it that night but the number was increased Monday morning," said Mr Kofa. He said the fire is at Kinangop Peak, a short distance from Elephant Peak, the highest point of Aberdare

Forest where a FlySax plane crashed in June last year.

Mr Kofa says a multiagency team is working to contain the fire within a 500-square metre stretch. The KWS boss said officers have been deployed to pursue suspected poachers who could have started the inferno.

"We have identified some tracks left behind by strangers in the forest who we suspect to be rhino poachers. We are pursuing the strangers to establish their motive, they might have started the fire to make it easy for their poaching mission," said Mr Kofa.

"The rhino poachers also have a habit of lighting the fire so that they can kill the animals as we concentrate on firefighting, but they will not succeed," he added. Mr Kofa said forest fires are common during the honey harvesting season.

"The fire season is here with us again, its honey harvesting season. We expect fires in the Aberdare and Mt Kenya forests but we have activated our response team," he said. AFP



The three men travelling in the vehicle were farmers, Amnesty says

the Lower Shabelle region when their car was targeted, Amnesty says.

Eleven people interviewed, including co-workers and family of the men killed, were "adamant that none of the men was a member of al-Shabab", it added.

"It's bad enough that the US Africa Command appears not to know who its air strikes are actually killing and maiming in its secretive war in Somalia," Abdullahi Hassan, a Somalia researcher for Amnesty, said in a statement.

reasonable methodology that accounts for weapons effects and mitigates risk to civilians," he added. US air strikes in Somalia surged in April 2017 after President Donald Trump declared the south of the country an "area of active hostilities".

On Monday al-Shabab militants attacked a military base where US soldiers train commandos in Somalia.

Military officials said the jihadists were repulsed without breaching the perimeter fence. BBC

EDITORIAL

Sen. Teahjay's vague argument

SINOE COUNTY SENATOR J. Milton Teahjay's challenge against his colleague, Senator Abraham Darios Dillon of Montserrado County about salary, allowance and benefits for a senator lacks fundamental basis to say the least. In his noise on Monday, 30 November in plenary, Senator Teahjay didn't provide any new information against what Dillon had disclosed except window-dressing the issue.

IN MAKING HIS disclosure recently on how much he earns as Montserrado County Senator, Dillon was clear that he provided gross figures about his salary, allowance and benefits as received from the Senate Chair on Ways, Means and Finance Senator Morris Saytumah of Bomi County.

BUT TEAHJAY VAINLY argued that Dillon didn't not compartmentalize or break down the figures he received from Senator Saytumah. Instead, he read them to the public in lump-sum.

The question is, compartmentalized or not, was there any variance in the figures, as read out by Senator Dillon? This is what Senator Teahjay attempted to insinuate unsuccessfully on Monday.

EVEN IF DILLON had erred, as Teahjay tried to impress on the public, whose responsibility is it to state the right figures or to clarify? Surely not Teahjay, but Senator Morris Saytumah, who chairs the Committee on Ways, Means and Finance, instead.

WHERE DID TEAHJAY get his authority to challenge figures that did not originate from him in the senate? If there were inaccuracies, we think the rightful person to have blamed is Senator Saytumah; not Dillon because the former read directly from the handwritten paper he received; nothing else.

EVERY PAY CHECK indicates a gross salary before a breakdown of deductions for taxes, social security and insurance, among others. Hence, it is never wrong to say I earn a gross salary of X amount.

BUT THEN WE understand why Teahjay is foaming. Dillon did what the Sinoe County Senator had not done in the past nine years or more - disclosing how much he earns as a senator, which should be a public record.

FROM THE PAST administration to the present, Lawmakers at the Capitol during every fiscal period allot to themselves fabulous salaries, allowances and incentives that drain the national budget and deny attention to other critical sectors. Besides, they have refused to be audited for public money received.

THAT SENATOR DILLON is departing from the past by shinning light on how much taxpayers' money goes to an individual senator, let alone a member of the House, while the people whom they claim to represent died from lack of drugs, tools and power in hospitals across the country, exposes the depth of greed, selfishness and sheer insensitivity of our national leaders. So, it is out of shame and apparent embarrassment that Teahjay spoke, for what was withheld from the people, has come to light.

The New Dawn
TRULY INDEPENDENT

COMMENTARY

By Claus Sørensen

Europe Needs a Migration Reset

The new European Commission under President Ursula von der Leyen must regain control over migration while respecting the dignity of those seeking a better life. To do this, it needs to reset the European Union's approach in four areas, mobilizing member states in the European interest.

BRUSSELS - More than 900 migrants trying to reach Europe have drowned in the Mediterranean so far this year. Meanwhile, the rescue ships Open Arms and Ocean Viking have spent the summer seeking a safe harbor that will allow their human cargo to disembark. The refugee and migrant camps on the Greek island of Lesbos are overwhelmed, and conditions in other holding camps in Libya are similarly horrific. And Turkey has undermined the 2016 agreement under which it had been stemming the flow of migrants into the European Union.

Although Europe wants to help the migrants and respect international law, it does not want to be overrun. The 2015-16 spike in the number of refugees and migrants entering the EU, many of whom were fleeing the war in Syria, dramatically undermined trust within the bloc. The huge inflow eroded governments' confidence in the EU's external borders and asylum management, and revealed the weakness of partnerships with migrants' countries of origin. Migration thus became a political football, to the delight of populists.

The new European Commission under President Ursula von der Leyen must therefore regain control over migration while respecting the dignity of those seeking a better life. To do this, it needs to reset the EU's approach in four areas, mobilizing member states in the European interest.

First, the EU must urgently secure its external border as a prerequisite for keeping its internal borders open. No other area with free internal movement of people, including countries such as the United States, India, China, Switzerland, or Russia, is outsourcing control of its external borders to its states or regions. Controlling the EU's external border must be a collective as well as a national task.

The EU's border and coastguard agency, Frontex, must therefore be reinforced further, and should deploy guards jointly with member states - including at maritime borders and airports. The EU must also revitalize its Operation Sophia initiative to combat refugee smuggling in the Mediterranean.

Second, Europe needs to handle economic migrants and asylum-seekers separately. Combining them has brought its asylum system close to collapse; separating them would help to ensure that those in fear for their lives can be given a fair hearing in which their rights are protected.

Addressing genuine economic and social needs in the EU requires an effective blue- or green-card policy for economic migrants, with an overall immigration target. And policymakers must not wait until the next migration crisis before introducing the scheme.

To make this happen, the EU may have to break some taboos. First, the number of economic migrants entering the EU labor market must be recognized as an issue of common interest. Second, the policy must make explicit which migrants are welcome. Third, member states must be asked what EU assistance they would need to smooth the process. Lastly, visas and work permits must be on the table to facilitate illegal migrants' return to their countries of origin.

True, in accordance with the EU Treaty, each member state manages immigration from outside the EU on its own. However, it would not be a giant leap for governments to agree to an overall EU-wide immigration target. In turn, member states could indicate the countries of origin and profile of economic migrants they prefer, and the EU budget resources needed to accommodate them. Having drawing rights to migrants would thus be a privilege rather than a burden.

Canada, for example, has long had an active immigration policy, with selection according to criteria such as country of origin, skill sets, and age group. Europe can do the same.

Third, the EU needs to repair its asylum system. For starters, it must scrap the insensitive insistence on the forced redistribution of asylum seekers within the EU. This has poisoned the atmosphere in the bloc, but may become workable once a fully efficient border, asylum, and immigration system is put in place.

In addition, frontline EU member states cannot be expected to cope on their own as illegal migrants cross external borders. Camps are overcrowded, and migrants are either abused or waved northward by overwhelmed authorities. The responsibility of the member state where these migrants first arrive must be complemented by European solidarity.

The EU must also provide expertise and funding to align the practices and management capacities of national asylum agencies. Only then will national decisions be respected across the Schengen zone, ensuring the preservation of the border-free travel area. Such alignment will also eventually enable the processing of asylum applications to be shared among member states.

Fourth, the EU should forge stronger, mutually beneficial partnerships with countries of origin and transit. Such ties are essential in order to enable the prompt return of those who are lawfully refused entry to the EU. To help secure cooperation, the EU should mobilize all its foreign-policy instruments, including development assistance and investment funds, and initiatives in security, trade, energy, agriculture, fisheries, climate action, air transport, and health. The EU immigration targets, combined with skill partnerships to prepare for jobs in Europe, would also be on offer for third countries interested in stable remittances.

At the same time, the EU must try to address migration's underlying causes. These include the demographic explosion in Sub-Saharan Africa; climate change, which is undermining food security; recurrent pandemics; ethnic conflict; and a shortage of jobs.

EU assistance should focus on restoring stability and reducing risks by supporting security, community resilience, and good governance. Success here will make investments safer and unlock private and domestic finance, thus enabling national economies to grow, create jobs, and offer an alternative to migration.

The new European Commission has an opportunity to move the EU away from knee-jerk reactions to migration crises and toward a far more coherent and sustained approach, internally as well as externally. It cannot afford to miss the chance.

MTN gives full scholarships to 100 lucky winners

By Winston W.Parley

The first 100 Lonestar Cell MTN Back to School Raffle Draw lucky winners were full of excitement on Friday, 20 September upon being told on a live program by MTN staff Mr. Kolubah Flomo that they had won 100% scholarship from the leading GSM Company, the MTN.

The Lone Star MTN Back to School Raffle Draw campaign, is intended to dish out about one million dollar to facilitate full scholarships for 500 lucky winners from public schools who paid their school fees using the MTN Mobile Money service.

The campaign enables lucky subscribers to win back all the money they have paid to their various schools through MTN Mobile Money service for the academic year. On Friday, the first draw saw 100 persons receiving 100% scholarships.

This raffle draw follows the launch of the MTN Mobile



schools who pay their school fees through MTN Mobile Money.

During the first draw at the company's head office in Congo Town, 100 MTN

the first. So today, we had like one hundred lucky winners," Prince Chesson, head of MTN Mobile Money said after the draw.

The MTN Mobile Money

"As you can see, we are empathizing with our customers, with our esteemed subscribers and we're putting ourselves in your shoes," Mr. Chesson continues.

He expresses the company's excitement to impact the lives

of people, saying the draw on Friday was just the beginning.

According to Chesson, September is called MTN's "Month to Remember," as he discloses a lot of things that the company has in store for its customers, including freebies.

MTN Senior Manager for Business Intelligence, Mr. Abraham Daramy says it's a pleasure to Lonestar Cell MTN to impact the lives of other people.

Mr. Daramy says 100 customers are given 100% scholarships by Lonestar Cell MTN for the academic year.

"...We'll make sure these people get the money today. We will make sure they receive the money today. We will make sure they'll be on the 100% scholarship from Lonestar Cell MTN," says Mr. Daramy.

Mr. Calvin W. Campbell, Director for Monitoring and Evaluation at the National Lottery Authority (NLA) witnessed the first draw, saying Lonestar MTN has come a long way and has been so transparent in these kinds of

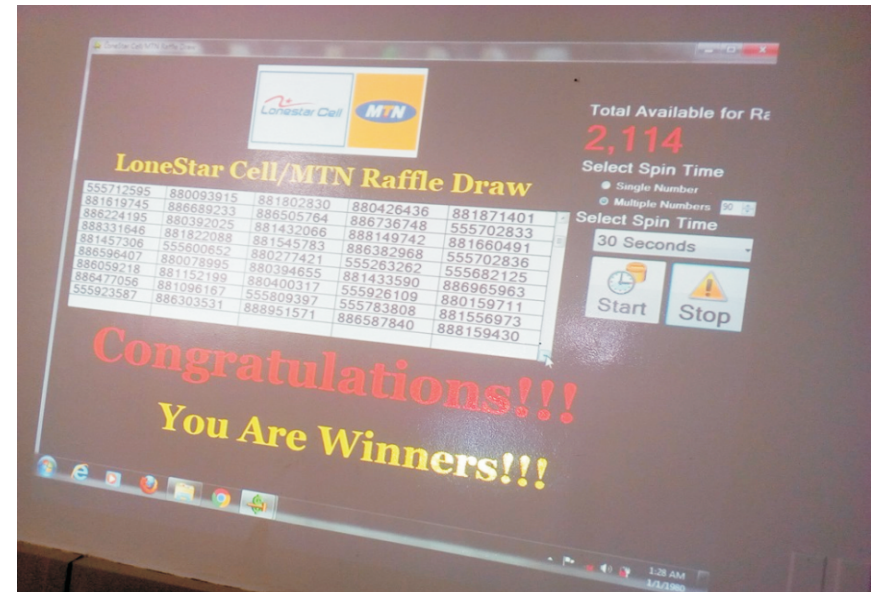


Money incorporated Back to School campaign on 5 September 2019 with the Ministry of Education. The aim is geared towards giving back to the numerous MTN subscribers attending public

subscribers were given back the same money they have paid to their various schools.

"Basically we are giving out one million dollars to 500 lucky winners. Today is just

Raffle Draw coincided with the company's celebration of back to school, as MTN staff wore uniforms of the different high schools from which they graduated.





CENTRAL BANK OF LIBERIA (CBL)



PRESS RELEASE

The Management of the Central Bank of Liberia (CBL) held a meeting with Members of the Board of Governors on several challenges facing the Bank, particularly restructuring and reforming the Bank to consider the way to fasttrack the reformation process. The follows were agreed upon:

- (1) The Central Bank of Liberia (CBL) will involve **Kroll** in the reformation process of the Bank.
- (2) The CBL will invite **Kroll** to Liberia for discussion at the end of which a contract will be signed between **Kroll** and the Bank with specific terms of reference.
- (3) The CBL will ensure that **Kroll** works with the Management and Members of the Board of Governors on the process for printing, movement and replacement of the Liberian Dollar currency.
- (4) The CBL will also ensure that **Kroll** is involved in the pending structural reformation of the Bank for effective, efficient and transparent operation. Doing so will require concentration on Departments and Sections with problems, among others.

Signed: Nathaniel R. Patray, III
Chairman / Board of Governors



PRESS RELEASE
SPEECH DELIVERED BY
NATHANIEL R. PATRAY, III
EXECUTIVE GOVERNOR/CENTRAL BANK OF LIBERIA
AT THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC DIALOGUE
(2019)



His Excellency Dr. George Manneh Weah
President, Republic of Liberia

The Chief Justice and members of the Judiciary
 The Speaker and members of the Legislature
 Officials of Government Present
 Traditional Council (Chiefs and Elders)
 Members of the Diplomatic Corp and Other Foreign Guests
 Our Development Partners
 Heads of Academic and Research Institutions
 The Religious Community
 Members of the Fourth Estate

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen:

I am honored to be here this morning as part of this all-important occasion. As a member of the Economic Management Team (EMT) of Liberia, I have been asked to speak on the monetary situation in Liberia, which I am glad to do. The timing of this occasion is relevant for the strengthening of policy in respect to the lingering macroeconomic challenges we face as a country.

Excellency, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, given the link amongst macroeconomic indicators, kindly allow me to present brief macroeconomic overview on the pre-shock era considering the period 2006 to 2013 and post shock era capturing the period from 2016 to 2019. The choice of the two periods, pre-shock and post shock, is explained by the Ebola, and commodity shocks, which began from 2014 and 2015, and UNMIL's departure, which started in 2017. These events are relevant for clearly engendering the necessary intervening mechanisms, because the impacts from these shocks still linger.

The Liberian economy recorded an average growth rate of 8.0 percent under an environment of relatively stable inflation and exchange rate from 2006 to 2013. Thanks to the huge international goodwill that stimulated capital inflows. There was massive external assistance, including UNMIL presence in the economy with average annual inflows of about US\$500 million dollars foreign exchange, from 2003-2018 and increased donor inflows of more than US\$2 billion dollars for capital and other investments over the period. These inflows largely explained the moderate pressure in the macroeconomic developments, translated into moderate inflationary pressures and low exchange rate volatility.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, the price dynamics and output in Liberia have been more radically influenced by factors outside the control of monetary authorities, characterized by supply-side shocks, such as inadequate production of basic consumables, payments for fees and services in foreign currency, limited market access and storage facilities, high import costs, infrastructure deficit and low inflows of donor support ("donor fatigue"). These situations have often constrained and overwhelmed monetary policy from effectively and efficiently responding to the inflationary and exchange rate volatility. This is not to say that the story of the looming inflationary situation is totally non-monetary. Growth in broad money over the years has also been significant, partly explained by relative expansion in economic activity. Expansionary fiscal policy also explains part of the story.

More sustained efforts have been slow in promoting economic activities in manufacturing and agriculture, as well as reducing the importation of basic consumables that the country can or has the capacity to produce. Productivity has been low in agriculture and manufacturing, reflecting less than 3.0 percent growth on average from 2006 to 2014. Economic activity remains significantly concentrated around the enclave sector with limited linkages between the concession sector and the downstream economic activities for the enhancement of value chain production and job creation.

The vulnerabilities of the Liberian economy became evident by the drastic decline in economic activities as a result of the effects of the Ebola health crisis and the global commodity price slump and exacerbated by the departure of UNMIL. From 2014-2016, investments and other economic activities were subdued with economic growth recording a contraction, from the seemingly impressive growth trajectory of 8.0 percent to negative 0.3 percent.

The current pressures on the domestic currency is accentuated with the departure of UNMIL and slow recovery in commodity prices as well as slowdown in donor assistance. This situation has exerted significant stress on the economy, which grew by an estimated 1.2 percent in 2018, from a revised growth of 3.2 percent, and is expected to further slowdown to 0.4 percent in this year, partly explained by the lukewarm policy response to address the hidden pre-Ebola vulnerabilities.

Today, inflationary pressures have heightened to almost 30.0 percent, whilst the volatility in exchange rate is rapidly increasing, being the highest in the sub-region, adversely contributing to the increasing socio-economic challenges.

Ladies and gentlemen, the exchange rate dynamics has emerged as the most predictable drivers of prices in several developing countries, including Liberia. Kindly permit me to highlight below some of the key drivers of exchange rate depreciation in Liberia:

(1) The growing demand for foreign exchange to facilitate imports. The demand for FX as a proxy for total amount needed to facilitate import payments for the first half of 2019 was US\$525.2 million, (imports value, CIF for first half, 2019) of which only 16.91 million (3.2 percent) was met through the CBL intervention, the remaining was acquired from the parallel

market, thereby causing pressure in the market;

- (2) Low domestic production in basic food and manufacturing to substitute for basic imported consumables;
- (3) Increased injections of Liberian dollars in the economy as a result of fiscal and monetary operations;
- (4) Low supply of foreign exchange due to low export earnings and capital inflows; and
- (5) Speculative factors driven by market perception about the future value of the Liberian dollar, thereby leading to a self-fulfilling "prophecy."

What is the CBL doing to mitigate the above challenges?

In view of the foregoing challenges, the following are being implemented.

- (1) The Bank is currently in the process of reviewing its existing Act to strengthen its operational and goal independence, including governance.
- (2) The Bank has developed a new Monetary Policy Framework and Charter to guide the operationalization of its Monetary Policy Committee (MPC).
- (3) This institutional structure will serve as a platform for the formulation and implementation of a forward-looking monetary policy and create the necessary condition for effective assessment of macroeconomic conditions. The new Monetary Policy Framework also seeks to give greater attention to the use of Liberian dollar as a currency of choice as part of the overall de-dollarization strategy.
- (4) The Bank, in collaboration with its development partners, is developing Forecasting and Policy Analysis System (FPAS). It is important to note that a result predictable and forward-looking monetary policies are guided by central forecasting systems that help quantify economic outlook. The CBL is also strengthening its data warehouse to enhance the conduct of empirical analysis and provide evidence-based policy advice.
- (5) The CBL is collaborating with other Government institutions and development partners to ensure strengthening and full implementation of the de-dollarization Roadmap through a more market and financial based approach. The CBL is working with its partners, fiscal authority, the banking sector and other key actors to ease the liquidity pressures using a mix of money market instruments, such as the standing deposit facility, CBL's bills, CBL's Auctions and reserve requirement ratio, among others through the development of appropriate interest rate corridor.
- (6) The CBL remains committed in the implementation of policies that would support the building of foreign exchange reserves to serve as buffer for the Economy. The CBL continues to work to restore public confidence in the financial sector and to attract money into the banking sector. This requires continual engagement with all stakeholders in the financial sector and strengthening our communication strategy.
- (7) The CBL is working toward full digitization of the financial system in order to enhance the provision of inclusive financial services and ensure financial deepening. We are also working toward deepening credit intervention programs in the microfinance and agriculture sectors to enhance the capacity of local and encourage investment in cash crops. To promote a cash-lite economy:
 - (A) The CBL is working towards increasing financial education, to take banking services to the public;
 - (B) The CBL is holding discussions with development partners and other stakeholders about promulgating regulations indicating that all transactions above a given limit, with the exceptions of goods traded over the counter which can be settled in cash, should be paid through bank transfers and not by cheque or cash, to encourage individuals to open accounts and manage them. This would be more useful if among other things, the mobile banking services such as those provided by MTN and Orange Money can be linked to bank accounts.
 - (C) The CBL is promoting interconnection of banks and other financial institutions via a common switch where for instance an ATM card from one bank can be used across all banks at an affordable price.

Monetary policy Developments

Distinguish ladies and gentlemen, monetary policy implementation has continued to be constrained in the achievement of the core mandate of price stability by the Central Bank of Liberia (CBL). This mandate is dictated by the fact that inflation has implications for eroding the purchasing power of households, reducing the revenue base of the country as well as inhibiting investment inflows and undermining the competitiveness of the economy.

Inflationary and exchange rate pressures do not seem to dissipate. However, CBL continues to muster efforts through diverse monetary policy instruments for containing the rising inflationary trend and reverting the situation in the medium-term. These efforts will come at significant monetary costs to the CBL (or cost to the Government); but the benefits of ensuring a stable macroeconomic environment far exceed the costs.

Due to the unabated inflationary and exchange rate pressures since 2015, the CBL is in the process of shifting its monetary policy framework from intermediate exchange rate targeting to the use of monetary policy rate as the key policy instrument of the Bank. Before now, our monetary policy involved the use of several monetary policy instruments, including the reserve requirements and foreign exchange auctions.

Let me draw your attention to the fact that the transmission mechanism of interest rates in the economy has been relatively ineffective, as the interest rate spread between the lending and saving rates remains wide in the absence of effective monetary policy rate. These phenomena have induced the CBL to contemplate the introduction of a proxy monetary policy rate, the Standing Deposit Facility and the Central Bank notes to be issued at high interest rates to attract liquidity into the banking sector. At the moment, currency outside the banking sector accounts for 86 percent, which is not healthy to promote vibrant financial intermediation and

monetary stability.

Ladies and gentlemen, as we all aware, a safe, sound and stable financial system is critical to macroeconomic stability and sustainable economic growth. This remains a major objective of the CBL. Despite the challenging macroeconomic environment, the banking industry remains relatively resilient, reflective of profitability, liquidity and capital. However, the high level of non-performing loans above the tolerable limit of 10 percent remains a constraint on the operations of the banking industry, and by extension credit to the private sector. The shallowness of the banking system, however, poses limitation on the effectiveness of monetary policy implementation.

Monetary policy has also been leveraging on other financial instruments to manage liquidity. As a way of increasing the fiscal space for short term cash needs of the government, the treasury bills have been operational with total issuance of 843 million Liberian dollars from January 2018 to end-June 2019 at an average yield of 4.38 percent per annum for 91 days. As a means of attracting retail investors into the money market, the CBL introduced its debt instrument called the CBL Bills, indexed against the exchange rate at a nominal rate of 7.0 percent per annum. The major challenge associated with operationalizing these instruments is the high rate of inflation vis-a-vis the yield on the instruments. In order to address these challenges, the Bank is considering increasing the SDF rate from 4 percent to 24.5 percent. Our major concern is the costs of about US\$9 million dollars required to finance the operation of this rate in one year.

Let me reaffirm that the Bank remains supportive of the Government's Pro-Poor Policy, especially the pillar emphasizing "Financial Inclusion." At the moment, access to financial services is estimated at 36 percent, significantly driven by mobile money. The Central Bank is in the process of strengthening efforts at promoting digitization of the financial system.

With this challenge, the CBL has proffered the following recommendations:

- (1) Efforts should be made to add value to the primary products to lengthen the value chain, diversify to reduce exposure to commodity price shocks and explore geographically diverse markets.
- (2) The Government is encouraged to strengthen their competitiveness and simplify its regulatory environments. The Government is also urged to develop digital ecosystems that are required to take advantage of the opportunity associated with digitalization.
- (3) Efforts should be made to provide conducive and enabling environment especially trade-related infrastructure for the private sector to harness the opportunities of trade.
- (4) The Government should apply measures aimed at lowering the cost of doing business i.e. ensuring regular supply of power, enhancing transport connectivity, and improving macroeconomic environment to lower the cost of capital.
- (5) The Government should continue to work with the ECOWAS Commission in taking appropriate measures to lift tariff and non-tariff barriers which are usually instituted under the banner of protectionism.
- (6) Regional trade integration protocols for the promotion of regional trade integration commitments should be encouraged to domesticate and implement.

The Bank is at an advanced stage in the finalization of important regulations, including rural financial services, mobile money, consumer protection, microfinance institutions, and payments system. All these policy initiatives are expected to deepen financial inclusion for the realization of stable financial environment and improved welfare.

Low financial access and services have continued to impose constraint on the implementation of monetary policy; hence the need for greater efforts to deepen the financial system, something that the CBL prioritizes as aptly articulated in the Financial Sector Development Implementation Plan (FSDIP) which was launched in 2014 with support from the World Bank.

The CBL, in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance and Development (MFDP) recently developed a detailed Roadmap for the Digitization of the Liberian economy. The Roadmap intends to leapfrog the Liberian economy from the present stage to a more efficient, transparent and productive system. The digitization initiative will also promote financial inclusion, minimize fraud, reduce delay in payments, and deepen financial activities.

As part of the roadmap implementation, the Bank continues to engage the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP) and the Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA) for the automation of all Government of Liberia's Revenue Collections and Disbursements. This integration will ensure the timely and seamless automation of payments of civil servants' salaries, pension benefits, vendor payments, and payments to other government ministries and agencies at the same time provide secure and efficient collection of Revenue.

The CBL is in readiness to implement, in collaboration with the West African Monetary Institute (WAMI) and the AFRIXEM Bank, the Regional Project for the integration of technological payment systems and the definition of a common framework for transacting, clearing and settling cross border transactions in domestic currencies. The project is expected to enhance trade in the sub-region, and to mitigate corresponding banking relationship difficulties, reaching to all market participants with financial services that are fast, reliable, simpler and affordable.

Conclusion

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, in conclusion please allow me to briefly outline some of the key challenges impacting effective monetary policy implementation in Liberia. They include:

- (1) Dual currency regime that limits monetary policy options by the CBL;
- (2) The shallowness of the financial system, as reflected by the lack of functioning financial markets where policy instruments are traded;

- (3) Excess liquidity outside the mainstream banking system, which is undermining intermediation;
- (4) Limited foreign reserves, thus inhibiting the CBL's ability to adequately respond to potential external shocks to the economy and help smoothen exchange rate volatility;
- (5) High imported cost push inflation that has adverse implications for real purchasing power;
- (6) Low credit to the private sector, especially agriculture and manufacturing;
- (7) High cash driven economy which increases the costs of financial transactions and risks; and
- (8) High non-performing loans which undermines the real liquidity positions of banks and the economy in general, which could negatively affect the real economy;

What is the Central Bank of Liberia (CBL) doing to mitigate the challenges impacting effective monetary policy implementation in Liberia?

In view of the foregoing challenges, the following are being implemented by the CBL:

- (1) The CBL has reviewed its Act of 1999 in collaboration with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to strengthen its operational and goal independence, including governance. The document has been submitted to the Board of Governors of the Bank;
- (2) The Bank has developed a new Monetary Policy Framework and Charter to guide the operationalization of its Monetary Policy Committee (MPC). This institutional structure will serve as a platform for the formulation and implementation of a forward-looking monetary policy and create the necessary condition for effective assessment of macroeconomic conditions. The new Monetary Policy Framework also seeks to give greater attention to the use of Liberian dollar as a currency of choice as part of the overall de-dollarization strategy;
- (3) The Bank, in collaboration with its development partners, is developing Forecasting and Policy Analysis System (FPAS). It is important to note that a result predictable and forward-looking monetary policies are guided by central forecasting systems that help quantify economic outlook;
- (4) The CBL is also strengthening its data warehouse to enhance the conduct of empirical analysis and provide evidence-based policy advice;
- (5) The CBL is collaborating with other Government institutions and development partners to ensure strengthening and full implementation of the de-dollarization Roadmap through a more market and financial based approach;
- (6) The CBL is working with its partners, fiscal authority, the banking sector and other key actors to ease the liquidity pressures using a mix of money market instruments, such as the standing deposit facility, CBL's bills, CBL's Auctions and reserve requirement ratio, among others through the development of appropriate interest rate corridor;
- (7) The CBL remains committed in the implementation of policies that would support the building of foreign exchange reserves to serve as buffer for the economy;
- (8) The CBL continues to work to restore public confidence in the financial sector and to attract money into the banking sector. This requires continual engagement with all stakeholders in the financial sector and strengthening our communication strategy;
- (9) The CBL is working toward full digitization of the financial system in order to enhance the provision of inclusive financial services and ensure financial deepening;
- (10) We are also working toward deepening credit intervention programs in the microfinance and agriculture sectors to enhance the capacity of local farmers and encourage investments in cash crops;

To promote a cash-lite economy,

- (1) CBL is working towards increasing financial education, to take banking services to the public;
- (2) CBL is holding discussions with development partners and other stakeholders about promulgating regulations indicating that all transactions above a given limit, with the exceptions of goods traded over the counter which can be settled in cash, should be paid through bank transfers and not by cheque or cash, to encourage individuals to open accounts and manage them. This would be more useful if among other things, the mobile banking services such as those provided by MTN and Orange Money can be linked to bank accounts.
- (3) The CBL is promoting interconnection of banks and other financial institutions via a common switch where for instance an ATM card from one bank can be used across all banks at an affordable price.

At the just concluded Statutory meeting of the West African Monetary Zone (WAMZ) in Conakry, Guinea, the CBL held a side meeting with the Central Bank of Nigeria with the aim of knowledge sharing on some of these initiatives and to promote intra-regional trade through the direct exchange of Liberia dollars for Naira and vis versa. I am glad to inform you that the scoping mission from Nigeria is expected in Liberia from September 7 to 12, 2019.

Before I close, let me extend my thanks and appreciation to all our partners, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, and International Finance Corporation (IFC), USAID, UNDP, UNFPA, the diplomatic Missions accredited near Monrovia, ECOWAS, AU and MRU for their technical and financial support to the work of the CBL. We are also grateful to the various Ministries and Agencies of Government, financial institutions, and the Liberian people for their cooperation.

Thank you for your attention.

Français

Les sénateurs s'offusquent contre leur collègue pour avoir exposé leur salaire

La salle de conférence du Sénat au Capitol a été le théâtre d'un débat houleux lundi 30 septembre lorsque les sénateurs J. Milton Teahjay du comté de Sinoe et Francis D. Paye du comté de Rivercess ont demandé au nouveau Sénateur Abraham Darius Dillon du comté de Montserradode retirer les informations qu'il a données sur le salaire des sénateurs.

Mais les sénateurs Saah Joseph de Montserrado, Jonathan Kaipay de Grand Bassa, J. Gbleh-bo Brown du comté de Maryland et bien d'autres s'y sont opposés.

Le sénateur Dillon a rendu public son salaire la semaine dernière. Selon lui, son salaire mensuel est de 15 000 USD plus 29 000 LRD, à part les primes de transport et de carburant. Le sénateur Dillon avait promis lors de la campagne électorale de révéler son salaire.



Sen. Abraham Darius Dillon

Sen. J. Milton Teahjay

Mais le sénateur Teahjay a contesté les chiffres mentionnés par le sénateur Dillon.

Pour lui, les chiffres donnés par son collègue ne reflètent pas la réalité. « Il faut qu'il retire ce qu'il a dit

parce qu'il a induit le public en erreur ».

Cependant, le sénateur J. Gbleh-bo Brown de Maryland a soulevé la question de procédure, rappelant à ses collègues qu'une telle question ne devrait pas être

discutée en séance plénière, car la conférence de presse personnelle d'un sénateur n'a jamais fait partie de l'ordre d'une session plénière. Le sénateur Brown a maintenu que le sénat communiquerait avec le public de la manière la plus appropriée.

Mais le sénateur Teahjay a affirmé que le revenu net d'un sénateur est de 7 994,32 USD par mois plus 29 000 dollars libériens. Il a ajouté que les primes de transports sont de 3 175 USD. Cette prime est utilisée par l'Etat pour acheter le véhicule du sénateur.

« Le gouvernement a mis ce chiffre là pour indiquer la valeur du véhicule pour une période de quatre ans. Après cette date, vous pouvez décider de vous adresser à la GSA (Agence de services généraux) pour l'acheter

définitivement. L'argent n'est pas un revenu, il est attribué à un sénateur, mais il n'est pas payé à la maison. Mais Dillon comptabilise cela dans le cadre de la rémunération des sénateurs, ce qui est une erreur ».

Il a également expliqué que les sénateurs reçoivent 2 150 dollars US pour le carburant par mois, ce qui représente 428 gallons d'essence par mois et par sénateur. Il ne s'agit pas de l'argent en espèce, mais des bons d'essence.

Le sénateur Morris Saytumah qui préside le Comité sénatorial sur les affaires financières du Sénat n'avait pas induit le sénateur Dillon en erreur, mais ce dernier aurait mal interprété les données, a en croire le sénateur Teahjay.

Le sénateur Dillon a à son tour réagi, tout en affirmant que le sénateur du comté de Sinoe avait seulement déclaré qu'il a menti sans indiquer le vrai salaire brut mensuel de chaque sénateur. Je suis combattu aujourd'hui parce que quand on a le pouvoir de fixer son propre salaire qui est versé par les pauvres contribuables, on a honte d'en parler en public et vous n'iez quand quelqu'un en parle», a fait observer Dillon.

Dillon a affirmé qu'il n'a pas peur même si ses collègues s'en prennent à lui car il s'est rendu au Sénat libérien pour apporter un changement. Il a juré de veiller à ce qu'il ait un changement. « Je suis venu perturber le pays de manière constructive », a-t-il ajouté.

Sénégal : après sa libération de prison, quel avenir politique pour Khalifa Sall ?

Au Sénégal, Khalifa Sall a été libéré le 29 septembre au soir après une grâce du président Macky Sall. L'ancien maire de Dakar avait été condamné à cinq ans de prison et 5 millions de francs CFA d'amende (environ 7 600 euros d'amende) en mars 2017 pour « escroquerie sur des deniers publics », une condamnation confirmée en appel. Mais désormais libre, il reste inéligible.

Après sa libération, l'ex-maire de Dakar, Khalifa Sall, a passé la journée avec ses

plus proches à Tivaouane, ville située à une centaine de kilomètres au nord-est de la capitale. À la mairie de Dakar, certains de ses soutiens et de ses partisans se félicitent de sa libération et rêvent déjà au retour du maire aux affaires. Devant le bâtiment, la pancarte « Dakar sous les verrous » avec le portrait de Khalifa Sall et le nombre de jours de détention, est toujours présente.

Bassirou Cissé, qui fait partie depuis 2009 du service de sécurité de la mairie,

connaît bien Khalifa Sall et espère le revoir bientôt. « On rend grâce à Dieu, déclare-t-il. Khalifa Sall nous amène de la joie. Il se bat pour la liberté du peuple. Il se bat aussi pour la justice. Le peuple est souverain devant les politiques et il se bat pour cela ». Il s'agit de la prochaine étape du combat de Khalifa Sall : récupérer ses droits politiques. La peine de prison et l'amende de 5 millions de francs CFA (7 600 euros) ont été abrogées, mais la grâce n'efface pas la condamnation.

Amnistie ?

L'ancien maire de Dakar ne peut ni voter, ni participer à une élection. Et le décret signé le 29 septembre par le président ne concerne pas les dommages et intérêts dus à l'Etat par Khalifa Sall et deux de ses coaccusés, soit environ 2,8 millions d'euros.

« C'est une épée de Damoclès », selon l'un de ses avocats, maître Seydou Diagne.

Dissident du Parti socialiste, candidat déclaré mais exclu de la dernière présidentielle en février dernier, révoqué de ses fonctions de maire et de député, Khalifa Sall dispose

de deux possibilités pour poursuivre son combat politique en vue des prochaines échéances, les élections locales, les législatives de 2022 puis la présidentielle de 2024 : une révision de son procès, ou une loi d'amnistie à l'Assemblée.

Cette dernière loi pourrait également concerner Karim

Wade. Le fils de l'ancien président Abdoulaye Wade, condamné pour enrichissement illicite, gracié en 2016, en exil au Qatar, reste lui aussi inéligible et sous le coup d'une amende de plus de 210 millions d'euros. Cette proposition pourrait être évoquée dans le cadre du dialogue national.



Articles traduits

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Français

Éditorial

Mieux vaut éviter les grèves inutiles et écouter les travailleurs

Les travailleurs de la santé ont mis fin à leur mouvement de grève et repris le travail après avoir finalement trouvé un compromis avec le gouvernement libérien le vendredi 27 septembre à la suite des tractations houleuses. La grève qui a duré une semaine a presque paralysé tout le secteur de la santé du pays. Les travailleurs de la santé, sous la bannière du Syndicat national des travailleurs de la santé du Libéria (NAHWUL), réclamaient notamment le versement de leur salaire intégral et une amélioration de leurs conditions de travail.

La situation était telle que des femmes enceintes ont érigé des barricades, obstruant la route de la communauté de Du-Port Road, à Paynesville, exigeant qu'elles soient prises en charge. Des décès auraient été enregistrés dans certaines régions du pays en raison du manque de service minimum.

La Docteure Wilhelmina Jallah, ministre de la Santé, faisait partie de la délégation officielle du Président George Manneh Weah à la 74ème Assemblée générale des Nations Unies à New York, mais elle a dû rentrer urgemment au pays afin de dialoguer avec les dirigeants du syndicat des travailleurs de la santé.

Il est regrettable que le Libéria dont le système de santé est déjà très défaillant soit obligé d'être affecté par des affres de la grève des agents de santé lésés, soit par négligence ou par le refus des autorités de prêter d'attention. A noter que la récente grève des travailleurs de la santé, qui réclament de meilleures conditions de travail et une augmentation des salaires, n'est pas la première de son genre.

Rien n'a filtré des discussions à l'issue desquelles le compromis a été trouvé, mais le secrétaire général du Syndicat national des travailleurs de la santé du Libéria, George Poe Williams, animant un point de presse conjointement avec le ministre de la Santé, la docteure Jallah, vendredi dernier au ministère de l'Information, a appelé l'ensemble des membres à suspendre la grève et à reprendre immédiatement le travail.

Nous sommes convaincus fermement que la situation déplorable aurait pu être évitée si le gouvernement avait correctement défini ses priorités. Une nation dont les citoyens sont en bonne santé est une nation riche. Par conséquent, le secteur de la santé devrait faire partie des priorités. Le gouvernement devrait chercher à doter le pays d'une main-d'œuvre qualifiée, proposer des salaires attractifs et pourvoir aux besoins des hôpitaux en médicaments.

La grève n'a pas été improvisée. Les dirigeants du NAHWUL avaient attiré l'attention des autorités sur le manque de médicaments, de carburant pour les groupes électrogènes et d'équipement de protection dans les établissements de santé du pays, mais en vain.

De toutes les façons, la ministre Jallah a promis de rester en contact avec les dirigeants du syndicat des travailleurs de la santé, d'améliorer les salaires des docteurs et des infirmiers et d'approvisionner les hôpitaux publics en médicaments et autres matériels indispensables. Nous espérons que ce ne sont pas de simples promesses. Il est important que le gouvernement tienne ses promesses étant donné que les agents de santé ont repris le travail.

Si le gouvernement avait pris au sérieux le préavis de grève des professionnels de la santé, on n'en serait pas là, des citoyens innocents n'auraient pas perdu la vie par manque de service minimum dans les hôpitaux, et aussi la ministre de la Santé n'aurait pas abrégé sa visite à New York juste pour rentrer dans le pays pour négocier avec les grévistes. Elle aurait dû aborder et régler la question avant de quitter le pays.

En outre, a quoi bon se faire accompagner par une délégation de 30, 40 ou 50 membres à une visite officielle à l'étranger aux frais des pauvres contribuables. Il faut que le Président réduise sa délégation officielle aux conférences internationales pour se pencher sur le secteur de la santé.

COMMENTAIRE

Par Claus Sørensen

L'Europe a besoin d'une refonte migratoire

BRUXELLES - Plus de 900 migrants déterminés à rejoindre l'Europe se sont noyés en Méditerranée depuis le début de l'année. Les navires humanitaires Open Arms et Ocean Viking ont passé l'été à rechercher un port autorisant le débarquement de leurs passagers secourus. Les camps de réfugiés et de migrants de l'île grecque de Lesbos demeurent surpeuplés, de même que les conditions dans les centres de rétention de Lybie restent désastreuses. Enfin, la Turquie ne semble plus respecter l'accord de 2016 en vertu duquel le pays était censé endiguer le flux de migrants vers l'Union européenne.

Bien que l'Europe entende venir en aide aux migrants et respecter le droit international, elle refuse de se retrouver dépassée par la situation. L'augmentation considérable du nombre d'arrivées de réfugiés et de migrants dans l'UE en 2015-2016, qui pour beaucoup fuyaient la guerre en Syrie, a gravement érodé la confiance au sein du bloc. Ces arrivées en masse ont mis à mal la confiance des gouvernements dans les frontières extérieures de l'UE ainsi que dans la gestion des demandes d'asile, et révélé la fragilité des accords conclus avec les pays d'origine des migrants. Les migrations sont ainsi devenues l'objet d'une bataille politique, à la grande satisfaction des populistes.

La nouvelle Commission européenne de la présidente Ursula von der Leyen doit rétablir un contrôle sur les migrations, tout en respectant la dignité de ceux qui aspirent à une vie meilleure. Elle doit pour cela opérer une refonte de l'approche de l'UE dans quatre domaines, en mobilisant les États membres autour de l'intérêt de l'Europe.

Il incombe tout d'abord à l'UE de sécuriser ses frontières extérieures, une condition préalable essentielle au maintien de l'ouverture de ses frontières intérieures. Aucun autre espace au monde caractérisé par la libre circulation des individus, que ce soit aux États-Unis, en Inde, en Chine, en Suisse ou en Russie, ne sous-traite à ses États ou régions le contrôle de ses frontières extérieures. Le contrôle de ces frontières doit constituer une tâche à la fois collective et nationale.

L'agence des garde-frontières et garde-côtes de l'UE, Frontex, doit pour cela être renforcée, et pouvoir déployer des gardes conjointement avec les États membres - notamment aux frontières maritimes et dans les aéroports. L'UE doit par ailleurs redynamiser son opération Sophia de lutte contre les passeurs de réfugiés en Méditerranée.

Deuxièmement, il est nécessaire que l'Europe gère distinctement migrants économiques et demandeurs d'asile. Le traitement combiné des deux statuts a poussé le système de l'asile jusqu'au bord du précipice. Une gestion distincte permettrait à ceux qui craignent pour leur propre vie d'être légitimement entendus, et de voir leurs droits protégés.

La réponse aux situations réelles de nécessité économique et sociale dans l'UE exige une politique efficace de visas de travail ou de séjour pour les migrants économiques, accompagnée d'un objectif global d'immigration. Les décideurs politiques ne doivent pas attendre que la prochaine crise migratoire survienne pour mettre en place un tel système.

Pour ce faire, l'UE va sans doute devoir briser un certain nombre de tabous. Pour commencer, le nombre de migrants économiques à pénétrer sur le marché du travail de l'UE doit être admis comme une question d'intérêt commun. Deuxièmement, la politique appliquée doit formuler explicitement quels migrants sont les bienvenus. Troisièmement, les États membres doivent être interrogés sur le niveau d'aide de l'UE dont ils ont besoin pour fluidifier le processus. Enfin, la question des visas et permis de travail doit être mise sur la table pour faciliter le retour des migrants illégaux dans leur pays d'origine.

Certes, en vertu du traité de l'UE, chaque État membre gère comme il l'entend l'immigration depuis

l'extérieur de l'Union. Pour autant, ce ne serait pas un bon de géant pour les gouvernements que de convenir d'un objectif d'immigration global à l'échelle de l'UE. En retour, les États membres pourraient indiquer leurs préférences en termes de pays d'origine et de profils des migrants économiques, ainsi que les ressources budgétaires de l'UE nécessaires pour les accueillir. De tels droits d'accès à certains migrants deviendrait ainsi davantage un privilège qu'une charge.

À titre d'illustration, le Canada applique depuis de nombreuses années une politique d'immigration active, caractérisée par une sélection en fonction de critères tels que le pays d'origine, les compétences, et la catégorie d'âge. L'Europe peut en faire de même.

Troisièmement, l'UE doit rectifier son système d'asile. Il lui faut tout d'abord abandonner cette insistance insensée qui caractérise la répartition forcée des demandeurs d'asile au sein de l'UE. Cette démarche a en effet empoisonné l'atmosphère au sein du bloc, mais pourrait devenir fonctionnelle une fois mis en place un système pleinement efficace de frontières, d'asile et d'immigration.

Par ailleurs, il ne peut être demandé aux États membres frontaliers de l'UE de faire face seuls aux migrations illégales qui traversent les frontières extérieures du bloc. Les camps sont aujourd'hui saturés, et les migrants soit malmenés soit envoyés vers le nord par des autorités dépassées. La responsabilité de l'État membre de première arrivée des migrants doit être complétée par une solidarité européenne.

L'UE doit également apporter expertise et financements afin d'harmoniser les pratiques et capacités de gestion des différentes agences nationales d'asile. C'est seulement alors que les décisions nationales pourront être respectées dans l'espace Schengen, assurant ainsi la préservation d'une zone intérieure de circulation sans frontières. Cette harmonisation permettrait également en fin de compte le partage du traitement des demandes d'asile entre les États membres.

Quatrièmement, l'UE doit nouer des partenariats plus solides, mutuellement bénéfiques, avec les pays d'origine et de transit. Ces accords sont essentiels pour permettre le retour rapide de ceux qui se voient légalement refuser l'entrée dans l'UE. Afin d'établir cette coopération, il est important que l'UE mobilise tous ses instruments de politique étrangère, aide au développement et fonds d'investissement inclus, tout en conduisant des initiatives en matière de sécurité, commerce, énergie, agriculture, pêche, action climatique, transport aérien, et santé. Des objectifs d'immigration pour l'UE, associés à des partenariats de formation permettant une préparation aux emplois en Europe, pourraient également être proposés aux pays tiers intéressés par des transferts de fonds stables émanant de leurs expatriés.

Il incombe dans le même temps à l'UE de s'attaquer aux causes profondes des migrations : explosion démographique en Afrique subsaharienne, changement climatique synonyme de menace pour la sécurité alimentaire, pandémies récurrentes, conflits ethniques, et pénuries d'emplois.

L'aide de l'UE doit s'axer sur le rétablissement d'une stabilité et sur l'atténuation des risques via la promotion de la sécurité, de la résilience des communautés, et d'une bonne gouvernance. Les réussites en la matière rendront les investissements plus sûrs, tout en déverrouillant la finance privée et domestique, ce qui permettra aux économies nationales de croître, de créer des emplois, et de proposer une alternative aux migrations.

La nouvelle Commission européenne a l'opportunité de libérer l'UE de ses réactions impulsives face aux crises migratoires, et de lui faire adopter une approche durable, beaucoup plus cohérente, tant sur le plan interne qu'externe. Elle ne peut se permettre de manquer cette chance.

Citizens' Feedback Mechanism TOT targets 60 GoL personnel

A 3-day Citizens' Feedback Mechanism (CFM) data base Training of Trainers (TOT) was conducted for 60 people from the Ministries of Internal Affairs and Finance and Development Planning, as well as the Liberia Institute of Geo-information Services (LISGIS).

The aim is to transfer knowledge to targeted personnel in pilot Counties hosting County Service Centers, on the use and management of the CFM portal and eventually clarifies the role each personnel will play in its implementation.

The 5 pilot counties are Nimba, Bomi, Grand Bassa, Sinoe, and Grand Gedeh.

The exercise facilitated by InfoNET,

emanating from the online system will be based on facts and evidence, reminding beneficiaries that they will have a responsibility to train others on how to use the system.

Charlene Wozie from the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) emphasized the usefulness of the training, as the government makes strides to decentralize services in the country.

Ms. Wozie described the project as "a step in the right direction" and committed the MIA to working closely with MACS to ensure a good feedback process.

A centerpiece of the Liberian Government's Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD)



is funded by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and organized in partnership with the Ministry of State.

The CFM database will be a robust depository of key data on service delivery, necessary for improving and informing policies on public services, in line with the goals of the PAPD.

At the training, UNDP Pillar Head for its Governance Programme, James Monibah, stressed that the CFM is linked to the Government's Performance Management System, in responding to the needs of the Liberian people and is necessary in strengthening people's participation in service delivery.

Monibah noted that information

includes improving the provision of quality public services to all its citizens, especially those most vulnerable and marginalized.

Part of this system includes the online (CFM) portal, that allows citizens to share their experiences and receive feedback from providers on the delivery of public services in real time, and generates valuable data about the quality of services as a basis for government-wide performance assessment and improvement.

It also provides information to citizens on the range of services offered by the various line Ministries, Agencies and Commissions (MACs), through a system of regular information broadcasts.



FUNERAL ANNOUNCEMENT



FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS OVER THE REMAINS OF OUR BELOVED MOTHER, SISTER, DAUGHTER, WIFE, COUSIN, GRANDMOTHER, MRS. CYNTHIA NENYI DAVIES - GONGAR WHO WENT TO BE WITH THE LORD ON SEPTEMBER 11, 2019 AFTER A PROTRACTED ILLNESS IS AS FOLLOWS:

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2019, THERE WILL BE A SILENT WAKE KEEPING AT THE FAMILY HOUSE ON 9TH STREET AT 8:00 PM.

ON FRIDAY OCTOBER 4, 2019, THE BODY SHALL BE REMOVED FROM THE ST. MOSES FUNERAL PARLOUR AT THE HOUR OF 9:00 A.M. AND SHALL BE TAKEN TO THE A. P. CAMPHOR UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, CLARATOWN, BUSHROD ISLAND.

THE FUNERAL SERVICE SHALL COMMENCE SAME DAY AT 10:00 A.M AT THE A. P. CAMPHOR UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, CLARA TOWN, BUSHROD ISLAND.

INTERMENT SHALL FOLLOW THEREAFTER AT THE KAISER MEMORIAL CEMETERY IN BREWERVILLE.

THE DECEASED LEAVES TO MOURN HER LOSS HER CHILDREN, WARD AND SEVERAL GRANDCHILDREN:

- MS. TRACY MONEH APPLETON
- MRS. BRENDA APPLETON-SENDOLO
- MR. ERASMUS DADDY APPLETON
- MS. JULIAN LITTLE GIRL APPLETON
- MR. LEO KATHY APPLETON
- MR. BADIO GOE
- MS. ESTHER GONGAR

HER BROTHER AND SISTER:
MR. HENRY KOFFA AND MRS. SARAH DAVIES-KENNEDY
AND A HOST OF OTHER RELATIVES AND FRIENDS
WITHIN LIBERIA AND THE USA.

THIS ANNOUNCE WAS BROUGHT IN BY THE APPLETON, DAVIES, GONGAR, SETTRO, WHETIE PORTEA FAMILIES ON BEHALF OF THE FAMILY.

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Weah reacts to criticisms

By Winston W. Parley

President George Manneh Weah has reacted to criticisms against his recent address at the 74th UN General Assembly in New York, saying he doesn't understand what his critics want.

"I just stated I don't understand what y'all want. Since we came to power I have not one day called for war crimes court. You the journalists called for war crimes court; Liberians are calling for war crimes court. Both the victims and perpetrators are calling for war crimes court," he told reporters Tuesday, 1 October at the Roberts International Airport.

"What I did is to explain to them, why now? So if you don't understand my English then you need to go back to the speech and then read it well," he said further during the interview upon his return from the UN General Assembly.

His comments are in



reaction to criticisms here that President Weah missed the opportunity to push Liberia's case at the UN, as his critics frown against his suggestions that those who lost the election are seeking to get to power through undemocratic means.

While addressing the UN, President Weah said "we are at a loss to understand why the clamor for the establishment of the Court is now being made, almost a full decade after it was first called for, and during which time no such pressure was brought to bear

on the government that grew out of the Accra Peace Accord."

He told the UN that "we are beginning to witness the emergence of a creeping threat to our democratic space," and to the hard-won peace and stability.

President Weah accused some individuals within and out of Liberia, "particularly those who have lost democratically-held elections" of resorting to incitement, threats of violence, misuse of social media, and hate speech, with the aim and objective of achieving power through undemocratic means.

Among many reasons for past protests here under President Weah's administration is a call to establish war and economic crimes court and the need to fight corruption, among others.

President Weah's ruling - Congress for Democratic Change, which is part of the ruling coalition, along with its current chair MulbahMorlu demanded the establishment of the war crimes court during the regime of former President Ellen Johnson - Sirleaf.

But as a ruling party the CDC and its political leader, President Weah continue to show their opposition against the court, as the president is heard in this latest interview.

Over 250,000 Liberians are reported to have died and properties worth millions of dollars estimated to have been destroyed during the civil crisis here.

President Weah got the backing of Nimba County Sen. Prince Yormie Johnson in 2017 to win the presidency.

Johnson is a former rebel general who led the independent national patriotic front of Liberia (INPFL), and he faces accusation over the brutal murder of then sitting president Samuel Doe.

"You calling for war crimes court, I say why this time when we have [an] economic issue, we're trying to develop our country? Why focus on the war crimes court now? Why you did not focus on it 12 years ago?" President Weah wonders.

President Weah indicates that those people that were part of the entire process of what happened to Liberians "led the 12 years."

"So why now? Is that what you want? Okay then we sent it to the Legislature so Liberians can talk about it. I want to give you an opportunity to talk about it instead of everyday disturbing the peace of this country," he notes.

He says he does not know why people have mix feeling when he informed the UN about what is unfolding on the ground.

"I don't think any Liberian should have mix feeling when I'm asking UN that we have [an] economic issues to see how they can help us. Because I remember couple of years back, I was one of those that went to ... went with the government to go for debt relief, there was no mix feeling. So I don't know why people will have mix feeling," he notes.

"Of course we spoke to our partners, some of the issues we're having here, what we try to put in place, we asked them to join us to do it. You know Liberia has a history of going to the UN, to the international community to help us. This is not the first time," he adds.

President Weah argues that "we rely on donors because we don't have the capability and we don't have the strength."

"Instead of galvanizing ourselves we believe that of course the international community can do everything for us, so the leaders have to go and let them know that we have to (enable us) work together," he concludes.

'Weah step down' campaign gains momentum

By Lewis S. Teh

In the wake of recent pronouncement by the pressure group Council of Patriots or COP to call on President George M. Weah to step down in December, some citizens term such planned action as unconstitutional, warning that it has the propensity to undermine the peace of Liberia.

Speaking to this paper Tuesday, October 1, a resident of Caldwell Township Nimely Wesseh, said though he supported the COP during its "Save the state" protest in June, he is against call for President Weah to step down.

"President Weah stepping down must be a self decision, and not for a group of people to storm the street, demanding him to step down, if that happened, such action

will be unconstitutional; he was elected", he said.

According to him, people cannot be complaining about the economic situation that has created serious hardship, while others are calling on the President to step down, something which he warned is not good for a little country like Liberia.

He said protests are good, because they bring about changes, but Liberians have a record of destruction during protest, pointing to the 1979 Rice Riot, which caused serious chaos in the country.

Mr. Wesseh suggested that the best way to relieve the President of his post is through the ballot, not by forcibly demanding his resignation.

"I encourage our brothers and sisters who are supporters of this so-called campaign to abandon their quest, and

allow the President to run his government. I'm not an official but just a secondary professor, so my thought here must not in any way suggest that I'm in government. We all want the best for this country, and the only way is by going to a democratic process, not by violence he cautioned.

Another resident of the township Ms. Annie Togkpa said though these are difficult times in Liberia, but the Council of Patriots is proceeding wrongly. She argued that if for any reason President should step down, that should be voluntary rather pressure from citizens.

MsTogkpa said if people start to think in such direction, the country risks another round of violence that could even lead to loss of lives and property.

"Liberia's problem is far from George Weah; let us give him the time; at the end of his tenure then, those of us that do not benefit from his regime can vote against him."

She noted that all she sees is complete hatred, adding those calling on the President to resign are disenchanted over jobs and power, saying, today they pretend to be in our interest, but tomorrow when they are given the same power, they might do worse than President George Weah.

However, several callers on a local radio program hosted by a member of the Council of Patriots Mr. Henry Costa on Tuesday October 1, 2019, endorsed the campaign a pledged their willingness to participate in the protest.



Sa Leone Special

Starts from backpage

against humanity, and a sentence of imprisonment of 50 years.

The Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone is responsible for the ongoing legal obligations of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, which concluded its mandate in

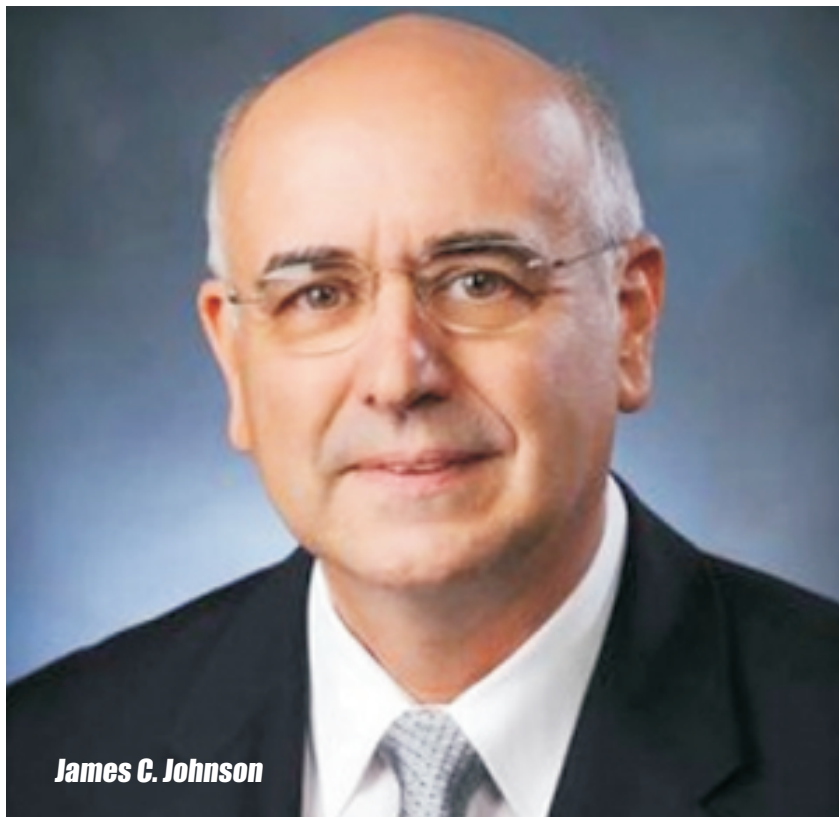
December 2013. These include supervision of prison sentences, witness protection and support, maintenance and preservation of the archives, and assistance to national prosecution authorities. -Press release

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Sa Leone Special Court gets new Prosecutor



James C. Johnson

The former Chief of Prosecutions at the United Nations barked Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL), has been named Prosecutor of the Residual Special Court.

He succeeds Brenda J. Hollis, who was appointed as

the International Co-Prosecutor of the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia. Mr. Johnson joined the Office of the Prosecutor at the SCSL in 2003 as Senior Trial Attorney, and was named Chief of Prosecutions in 2006.

After he left the SCSL in 2012 he served for three years as President and CEO of the Robert H. Jackson Center in Jamestown, New York.

Since 2013 he has been Adjunct Professor of Law and Director of the Henry T. King War Crimes Research Office, Case Western Reserve University School of Law in Cleveland, Ohio. He is also Director of the International Humanitarian Law Roundtable and Managing Director of Justice Consultancy International, LLC.

Prior to joining the SCSL, he served for twenty years as Judge Advocate in the United States Army. Ms. Hollis departs after having served as Prosecutor of the RSCSL since 2014 and of the SCSL since 2010.

While Prosecutor, she led the prosecution of former Liberian President Charles Taylor, culminating in the September 2013 appeal judgment confirming his guilt on all eleven counts for war crimes and crimes



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Cardiff must pay Nantes £5.3m for Sala

Cardiff have been ordered by FIFA to pay £5.3m (£6m) to Nantes for the transfer of Emiliano Sala.

The sum corresponds to the first instalment that Cardiff were due to pay the Ligue 1 club in January, as per the deal agreed for the transfer of the Argentinian striker.

Sala had signed for Cardiff for a £15m fee but died in a



plane crash in the English Channel on January 21 as he was flying to the Welsh capital

to start training with the then-Premier League side.

Cardiff had refused to pay

the fee for Sala as they believed the contract signed was "not legally binding", and Nantes subsequently complained to world football's governing body in February.

Following a meeting in Zurich last Wednesday, FIFA notified both clubs of its findings on Monday and stated they will have the opportunity to appeal the decision to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) in Lausanne.

"The FIFA Players' Status Committee established that Cardiff City FC must pay FC Nantes the sum of EUR 6,000,000, corresponding to the first instalment due in accordance with the transfer agreement concluded between the parties on 19 January 2019 for the transfer of the late Emiliano Sala from FC Nantes to Cardiff City FC," a FIFA statement read.

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